LOOK OUT FOR "STEALING AN ANGEL," NEXT WEEK

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"You have been watched, madame, and by my orders!"

Yost Middleton's Wife;

Or, A WELL KEPT SECRET

By T. C. HARBAUGH

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CHAPTER I.

A SPY REPORTS.

THERE was not a flaw, so the outer world thought, in the wedded life of the Middletons. Blessed with everything that should make life happy, with boundless wealth at their command, and the tenants of the most magnificent residence in the great city, their existence was deemed a paradise by all who knew them.

Middleton had met his wife some years prior to the opening of our story. They seemed made for each other—she the stately, beautiful and warm-hearted Edith Secours, and he the handsome, self-possessed man of the world, who did not have to knock to open the doors of Midas. She was of Southern origin, and whilst he came from the colder North there was no frigidity about him that repelled.

The apparent sunshine of their lives was to be obliterated by a cloud which suddenly darkened all the sky. A man had been on trial for murder, but had been acquitted, not, the world said, on account of the testimony, but through a technicality of the law and the eloquence of his counsel. The whole city wondered why Mrs. Middleton had sat out the trial in that stifling courtroom, why she had attempted to hide her identity behind a veil, and all this whilst her impetuous husband was enjoying himself elsewhere in apparent oblivion.

When the accused man went free he disappeared. The roaring mart seemed to have swallowed him with the voracity of a maelstrom. And society, which had pierced Mrs. Middleton's mask, wondered if her husband had heard of her singular doings. But there are secrets which are as well kept today as those of the Borgias and Messalinas. Middleton's wife felt secure in the belief that her mask had not been penetrated, and she met her husband with her oldtime smile and warm embraces.

One night Yost Middleton, seated in his handsome library, reached out his hand and touched the silver summoner on the table. Almost immediately the door opened, and a thin-faced man of forty entered and stood at attention on the rich flowers of the soft Axminster carpet. It was Barry Stokes, the valet, a man who had been ten years in Middleton's service, his companion before his marriage and his secret keeper since.

Middleton turned slowly upon the man and compressed his lips before he spoke.

"Stokes," he said, speaking with deliberation, "I am ready to listen now. What have you discovered?"

There was much of the eager spy about Stokes.

"She is still meeting him," he said, with cruel bluntness.

Middleton's cheeks changed from red to white, and his hand droppped from the edge of the table into his lap.

"You have made no mistake, Stokes?"

"Mistake?" the valet exclaimed. "Don't I know them both?"

"You should," assented Middleton. "You know my wife, and you should

know the man. When did you see them last?"

"Night before last."

"Where?"

"At the usual place, the roof garden of the Alhambra. The light penetrates behind the palms, you know."

"What did you observe?"

Stokes cleared his throat for a full report.

"I followed the man thither," said he. "Mrs. Middleton was already there. Their corner, I regret to say, was not adapted for listening. I saw her open her purse and hand him a roll of bills."

"What! the man Mason Marx, who was recently tried for murder?"

The words fell from Middleton's lips like the hiss of a serpent.

"The same man," quietly answered Stokes.

"And then—what?"

"She kissed him when he went away."

Middleton was on his feet in an instant. Sokes from his little black eyes watched his master with the bated intensity of a tiger. Back and forth over the yielding carpet paced the enraged husband. His nails seemed to cut the skin of the clinched hands.

Suddenly he whirled and faced the impassive Stokes.

"There can be no mistake in all this? If there is, Stokes, by heavens! you'll become a subject for the coroner."

"There is no mistake. How can there be when I found this at the foot of the seat she occupied?"

With this the valet drew forth a dainty lace handkerchief, which was snatched from his hand. Middleton pounced upon it with a cry.

"It is hers!" he exclaimed, and crushing it in a spasm of fury, he threw it upon the table.

"Whither did the man go, Stokes?" he asked.

"I did not follow him."

"And she?"

"She remained awhile after his departure, and, quitting the garden, went off in a taxi."

"And what did you do?"

"I went about a little business of my own."

Middleton dropped back into his chair and lapsed into silence.

"That is all, Stokes," he said, at last. "Is my wife in the house?"

"I believe she is in her own apartments, sir."

"Where is Lemora?"

"I cannot say."

Stokes turned away, but the cutting voice of Middleton called him back.

"You have traced this man to his lodgings, haven't you?"

"Yes, sir, number twenty-six Beacon street."

"That is all. Good night, Stokes."

Yost Middleton was alone. For a few moments he glared at the door through which his spy had passed, and then falling forward, buried his face in his hands. The room grew strangely still. The golden clock which ticked on a bracket sent forth sounds like the snapping of whip lashes. No one came in to disturb the strong man at the table.

When at last he rose his face was as white as bleached ashes and his whole contour seemed drawn. His eyes roved about the room till his gaze rested on a large portrait of the wife on the wall. She stood before him as she had looked on her wedding day, in dainty white and pearls, his wedding gift in her hair. It was a vision of loveliness, and through the years of their married life she had not changed.

Middleton slowly left his seat and went over to the portrait. He planted himself before it and gazed long and silently at the wondrous beauty of it.

"We have come to the parting of the ways!" he said suddenly. "For me there shall be no compromise."

He sprang at the picture as though he would wrench it from its frame, but instead he vengefully turned it to the wall, after which he shot out a laugh of bitter triumph.

"Number twenty-six Beacon street, Stokes said," he muttered. "But let the man go. It is her sin, the sin which is blighting. What would she say if I were to face her with her wrongdoing? What could this woman say?"

He went over to a desk in one corner of the room and sat down. He opened the desk and busied himself with some papers which he took from the pigeonholes.

"Shall I see her?" he cried, all at once. "Shall I see her before I go? What will be her defense? What will she say in extenuation of her sin?"

Once more he paced the room like a wild beast. Twice he went to the door and laid his hand on the knob, but fell backward as though to open that portal would show him all the horrid fires of perdition. He fought like a giant to become calm. At last he uttered a cry, for strains of soft music came to his ears.

"It is Lemora, the light of my soul," he cried, placing his hands over his eyes and sinking into a chair. "The fair girl whom I have raised knows nothing of my wife's crime. Dare I tell her? Yet she must discover it some time."

He leaped from the chair and ran across the room. Throwing open the door, he crossed a hall and opened another portal. A beautiful young girl was seated at a piano, and her delicate fingers were sweeping the keys in music which had charmed him a thousand times. She threw back her head as he entered and smiled.

"What would you like, papa?" she said in a sweet voice. "Shall I play your favorite from 'Tannhauser,' or would you sooner have one of the old folk songs?"

Middleton had stopped like one stung by a centipede. How happy his ward was. He did not reply, but going forward, pushed back the hair which framed Lemora's temples and kissed her. Wonderment swam in her deep blue eyes.

"I have come to kiss you good-by," said Middleton, and the unnaturalness of his tones increased the girl's wonderment.

"What! are you going off on a journey?" cried the fair musician. "I had not heard."

"I am going away," continued Middleton. "Be a good girl, Lemora. There, that will do now. Have the kindness to tell Mrs. Middleton that she is wanted in the library."

Lemora rose and tripped from the room, and Middleton, with the last swish of her garments on his ear, returned to the library and gazed at the door which he knew must in a few seconds be opened by his wife.

CHAPTER II.

HUSBAND AND WIFE.

The suspense was of brief duration. The carved door opened without the slightest noise and Middleton's wife stood before him.

She was a beautiful creature, rather tall, and with the deepest black eyes ever set in the head of charming woman. Richly gowned in a manner which revealed the outlines of her perfect figure, she was of herself lovely enough to cause even a more exacting man than Middleton to forgive her her transgressions. Her face lighted up with a smile as she greeted her immobile husband, but the next moment, catching the gleam in his eyes, her cheeks changed color and she waited for him to speak.

If Middleton had made up his mind how he was going to address his wife, her appearance for a moment disconcerted him. He seemed struck dumb in her presence. But all at once the accusation made by Stokes swept over him, the lace handkerchief which touched his hand on the table seemed a coal of fire, and his vengeance swept through his being like a simoon's breath.

"You have sent for me, Yost," she said, in the sweetest tones. "I hope you are not ill."

"It were better I were dead," he replied, almost choking at his own words, only the next moment to beat back any show of leniency. "I have sent for you, madam. Is this yours?"

He snatched the handkerchief from the table and extended it toward her. Her face did not change.

"It is mine," she answered. "Where did you get it?"

"It was found where you left it—at the roof garden of the Alhambra, night before last."

"But you did not find it?"

A smile had come back to her face, and as she took the handkerchief from his hand she stepped back silently.

"It matters little who found it," Middleton went on. "You lost it at your interview with that man."

For the first time Edith seemed to divine everything.

"I see!" she exclaimed, her face showing some irritation. "I have been watched."

"You have been watched, madam, and by my orders. There is little need of a confession, even if you should care to make one. You went to the Alhambra to meet a man?"

"I did."

"You met there one Mason Marx, who was lately before the bar charged with murder."

She bowed her head, and Middleton saw a little smile wreathe her lips.

"Have you no regard for your vows?" he went on, his fiery nature surging up within him like the waves of an angry sea. "You forget, madam."

"I have forgotten nothing," and she lifted her head and looked him fairly in the face.

"Impossible!" cried Yost Middleton. "You attended the trial of this man. You went every day veiled for the purpose of hiding your identity."

"That is true. I did not care to go as Mrs. Edith Middleton."

Her very coolness exasperated the husband.

"Before our ways diverge," he continued, speaking as coolly as possible, "you can tell me all."

"I will tell you nothing."

"Who is this man in whom you take such an interest as to attend his trial, and after his acquittal to meet him clandestinely at a roof garden?"

"You have named him. The world calls him Mason Marx."

"But why does he appeal to you—Edith? Why does this supposed murderer appeal to you, I say, above your own husband?"

"Perhaps he does not."

"But you meet him. You even give him money! You kiss this wretch! You——"

"There!" she interrupted, holding up a jeweled hand as her eyes got a dangerous light. "This has gone far enough. I have met this man. I lost my handkerchief at the roof garden. I met him there night before last. I gave him money and—I kissed him."

An oath quivered Middleton's lips, but he did not set it free.

"You stand before me and admit all this?" he exclaimed. "You confess that you have met the man who is believed to be guilty although the loopholes of the law let him through."

"The man is innocent!" said Edith.

"Guilty or innocent, it matters little," cried Middleton. "You have met him, and that is enough. Look yonder, madam."

Middleton's wife turned and followed the direction of his finger. She saw at a glance that her portrait had been turned to the wall. Her temples crimsoned while she looked, but again she turned to her husband and waited for him to speak.

"You refuse to tell me why this man appeals to you?" he went on. "You will brave it out, madam?"

"What I know, I know," was all she said, and Middleton's hands came together with a snap.

"The house and all there is in it is yours!" he continued. "From this moment our life paths diverge. You shall continue to be my wife in name but not in fact. The world may hold us both, but not this city. I shall go. You shall have for your constant companion the shadow of your sin."

She sprang forward and held out her hands. For a moment it seemed as though she would throw herself into his arms, but she suddenly straightened like a queen of tragedy.

"I have not sinned!" she cried. "I am as guiltless of wrongdoing as the babe that lies tonight in its cradle."

His lips curled scornfully.

"And yet you meet by appointment a man who stood but a little while ago at the bar of justice?"

"I have met this man."

"You met him more than once, madam?"

"More than once," she confessed. "I have met him frequently."

"The devil is in you, woman!" roared Middleton. "You should have been a Messalina."

Edith did not reply.

"I leave you to break the news to our adopted daughter. She is happy in the thought that you are as pure as her own young heart. God pity the girl." With this Yost Middleton turned away. He was watched by his wife till he laid his hand on the doorknob, when her voice rang out loud and clear.

"I leave the future to judge my acts!" she exclaimed. "I have broken no vows. I am as pure in thought as the day when you led me to the altar in New Orleans. I promised to love you then, and I have kept that promise inviolate. You have been my all in all these years. I have been a faithful wife to you. I have not denied that I met Mason Marx at the roof garden. I gave him money. I even pressed my lips to his forehead, and before high Heaven, I had a right to kiss him!"

The last words, shot straight into Middleton's face, fairly staggered him. They left him speechless. What manner of woman was this? Surely, was this the beautiful helpr who had stolen his heart in the old Creole days? Was this the handsome Edith Secours, the belle of the old Southern city, whom he had snatched from a score of admirers?

The whole thing seemed a dream, a phantasm to him. It was not true. He was asleep, and all this interview was but a vision of the night.

No, it was real. She stood before him with the same beauty as of other days, admitting that she had kissed one freed by a technicality from the charge of murder, a man who all his life must be under a ban, and she had refused to tell him why. He could do one thing, and that was to leave this enchantress, to turn from her and leave her to her sins. He would do this and do it now.

He replied not to her speech, he turned the knob and passed into the hall. If he expected her to follow him and fall upon her knees at his feet, with pleadings to be taken back to his love, he was bitterly deceived. Nothing of the kind happened.

The silence within the library was as heavy as that of death. Not a sound was wafted to his ears. Yost Middleton paused at the foot of the stair and cast a longing look upward. Lemora was in the house he was leaving to know that it was not surpassed by any of the others. He had lavished thousands upon it to make it a palace and a paradise for the woman whom he had now repudiated. The world might call her Middleton's wife till the grave closed over her, but he had kissed her for the last time. He cared not what society would say. He would never accuse her openly. If the world discovered why he had turned from her, well and good, but his silence should shield her as much as it could.

Middleton did not even look back at the home he was quitting. He walked rapidly away. Back in the library stood a woman all alone. Her face was white and her hands were tightly closed. Her breath for a minute came in little gasps.

"God pity me!" she suddenly cried. "I shall keep my secret to the end, though it has robbed me of a husband's love."

CHAPTER III.

STOKES SELLS A SECRET.

A man stood in a small room in one of the obscure streets of Paris. His surroundings were not of the best, but he looked like one who lived well despite this. On the table before him lay some papers which he had just read, for they had been thrown carelessly down and were huddled in a conglomerate heap.

Could the reader have seen this person, he might have recognized him as Barry Stokes, one time valet to Yost Middleton and the spy who had watched the disowned wife and Mason Marx in the roof garden of the Alhambra.

A year has passed since the events detailed in the preceding chapters. The scene has shifted from the American city to the gay Paris of the maddened world across the sea. Back in the city of the New World stood a mansion whose doors had not been opened for months. No one had mounted its marble steps in all that time to leave a card for the once happy Middletons, and over all hung a strange veil of doubt and mystery.

What had become of Yost Middleton none knew. There had sifted out of the Unknown a rumor that he had been seen in the byways of Europe and once at the tables of Monte Carlo where, amid its gay scenes, he ventured his wealth with the recklessness of a mad player. But this was mere rumor. No one wanted to say that he had really been seen. As to his wife and ward, Lemora, they had been swallowed up in the wild vortex of life, and all traces of them had been lost.

The mills of the gods grind slowly. There were those who said that Middleton had put his beautiful wife aside after having discovered her sin, that he had done right in placing between them a barrier as hard as adamant. But why had he disappeared? Why had he gone away between two days like some guilty fugitive who is haunted by the ghost of his victim? This was one of the unsolvable mysteries with which society had wrestled in vain and with which it still wrestled when there was nothing else to discuss.

Let us go back to the man in the obscure lodgings in Paris.

Barry Stokes had changed little during the lapse of time. He was well dressed, though his clothes had the sheen of long wear, but his makeup betokened the care and attention of old. His meditations were broken by the opening of the door behind him. Turning on his heel at the sound, Stokes stood face to face with a man who advanced with a pair of dark eyes already centered upon him. The man without invitation took a chair, crossed his legs, and drew forth a cigarette case from which he took a cigarette which he lit, throwing the remainder on the table with a glance at the one time valet.

"Well," he said, in good English, "are you ready to dicker now?"

Barry Stokes came over to where the man sat and for a moment regarded him in silence.

"I told you the other night," said he, slowly, "that I am no beggar."

"But you lied," was the cool response. "You wouldn't nest in the middle of the Rue Poverty if you were a nabob."

Stokes winced at this and averted his black eyes.

"Come, my friend," continued the man in the chair. "I will add a cool thousand to my offer. That is much in your eyes, for you have been dining at the Cafe Lafayette where they don't have the best."

Stokes watched the hand that slipped serpent-like to the man's pocket and his eyes got an avaricious gleam. He saw the man count out two thousand in bank bills and place the cash on the table before him.

"She will never know who gave her away," the visitor went on, with a grim smile. "She is somewhere in the city, and you know it."

"I know it," said the valet.

"Then why in the name of Heaven, don't you say the word that will get you a good dinner and clothe you like Solomon?"

The temptation was too much for Stokes. The man saw that he was yielding.

"She's nothing to you," said he. "She hates you like a viper, for she knows who betrayed her and the criminal to her husband."

"But there's the girl!" remarked Stokes, like a man grasping at a straw in the tumultuous seas.

"Never mind the girl," laughed the tempter. "I care nothing for her. It is the beautiful Mrs. Middleton I want."

At this the last scruple vanished. Stokes drew up a chair at the other side of the table and looked from the pile of franc notes into the brazen face of the man above it.

"I am not to be given away?" he ventured.

"Certainly not. Why should I betray you? Your work is done the moment you tell me where she is."

"Yes."

"Of course you've kept track of her?"

"I haven't lost sight of her for a moment, you might say."

"I believe that. You have watched her like a hawk, and probably have kept her husband posted."

(Continued on page eight.)

Fetters of Guilt

By Will Lisenbee

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CHAPTER XVII.

DOUBTS.

"JUST what I suspected!" nodded Darrell.

"You are quite a seer," said Quigley.

"In a small way," laughed Darrell. "But I'll be blamed if I can figure out what you are driving at. It is no more than likely that the man we are looking for is in the Sky Springs House at this very moment, and yet you want to make off for home without as much as a peep on the inside. Why is it?"

"I told you I would explain in due time," answered Quigley.

"But not now?"

"Tomorrow, perhaps."

"And in the meantime, our man will have escaped," remarked Darrell, dryly.

"If there is a man in the Sky Springs House," said Quigley, "he would have no object in escaping, as you put it."

"How do you know?" demanded Darrell.

"Let it suffice that I know."

"But in view of what we have already discovered," Darrell pursued, "you must admit that there are many reasons to suspect that the guilty man is hiding in the Sky Springs House!"

"Nonsense!" interposed Quigley.

"By no means!" insisted Darrell. "If you will take the trouble to reflect a moment, you will remember the conversation we had respecting the hat worn by Huddleson—the same one worn by the mysterious Robert Smith on the fatal night at the inn. This would seem, if one resorted to deduction, to connect Mr. Huddleson, or some one about the place, with the man Robert Smith, who is believed to have had some connection with the tragedy. And again, we suspect that there is a man in the Sky Springs House who is implicated in some way with the murder. We have, one might say, tracked him to the place. We arrive there and find Miss Simmons and Mr. Huddleson there! What is one to think? Will you tell me that?"

"One might think a number of things," answered Quigley, "and then be far from the truth. I admit that the circumstances give cause for the suspicions you have expressed, but my dear Darrell, there is nothing in it."

"Very well," Darrell said, "you can have it your own way."

It was long past midnight when they arrived in Mapleton, and Quigley retired at once, but it was dawn before he closed his eyes in sleep. The sun was shining brightly when he awoke, and after he had got up and eaten breakfast, he met Thomas Sears on the porch.

"I must apologize for not seeing you yesterday, as I fully expected to do," said Quigley. "The fact is, I was called away, and did not return till after midnight."

"Oh, that's all right," he smiled. "There isn't anything doing here, and time hung a little heavily on my hands. Anything new?"

"Well, I think I can say that I have made a little discovery that may be of interest to you."

"I am glad to hear it. Suppose we stroll over to the park and talk it over?"

As they entered the park Quigley said: "I believe I have got trace of your man."

"Sam Potter?"

"Yes."

"The deuce! When and how?"

Quigley explained, giving an account of his visit across the mountain and of what he had found out from Merrill and the storekeeper.

"And so Potter has fallen heir to the place you call the Sky Springs House? Well, by Jove! I guess you are on the right track. But there is one thing I don't understand—why he should be hiding there in the deserted house—if it is really he."

"Nor do I," agreed Quigley, "but I am inclined to believe he is there—or was last night."

"Did you not visit the place?" asked Sears.

"Yes, but we did not enter the house."

"Why?"

"For reasons which I can't explain just now."

"You did not see him?"

"No. If he is really hiding there, as appears, would you not take that as an indication of guilt?"

"Hardly, though it might have that complexion to some. I know Potter quite well, and I do not believe that he had anything to do with the murder of Mortimer Dent, if that is what you mean by his being guilty."

"What do you propose to do?"

"I shall go to the Sky Springs and investigate."

"Today?"

"Yes. If Potter is there I want to see him. I think he will be able to make everything clear."

"I shall learn something today," Quigley said. "I believe I am on the track that will lead to the solution of the mystery."

An hour later Dennis Quigley was driving in the direction of the Huddleson farm. He found Miss Simmons among the flowers in the garden. She started visibly as he approached, and he saw that there was a grave look on her pale face.

"Miss Simmons," he said, "I have been distressed and worried over the events of last night. I do not want to seem inquisitive, but it distresses me to see that you are in trouble."

"What makes you think I am in trouble?" she asked.

"I can see it in your face and manner," he replied.

She sank onto a rustic seat and looked at him in silence. Quigley came a little nearer and stood looking down at her. He was thrilled by her presence.

"Miss Simmons," he said, "you have not denied that you are distressed about something. Can't you confide in me? Won't you let me help you?"

She shook her head.

"I can't," she murmured.

"But you can and must!" he insisted. "In some way—I don't know how—you have become meshed in the Dent affair."

"How do you know?" she questioned, a startled look coming into her eyes.

"I have reasons to believe this from what I have seen," he replied, "and what others have seen." He paused for a moment. "I would not speak of this to you were it not that others suspect that Mr. Huddleson, or some one about the place, had become involved in the Dent affair. Perhaps some friend of yours has got mixed up in it, and you would shield by silence. One thing," he went on, "is known, and that is, that the hat worn by Robert Smith at the Black Bear Inn on the night of the murder is the same one that has since been worn by Mr. Huddleson."

Miss Simmons uttered a little gasp and was silent. Her face was white and her dark eyes were dilated with sudden fear. She swayed and clutched at a trailing vine for support, and she must have fallen but for Quigley's support.

A great wave of compassion swept through him, and as he held her for a moment in his arms he forgot everything else. He was thrilled to intoxication, and with an ungovernable impulse he held her in a close embrace and pressed his lips to hers. For a brief moment she yielded to his embrace, and then she released herself and stood before him with flaming eyes, a vivid color on her cheeks.

"Forgive me," he pleaded. "I was mad—I did not realize what I was doing—I love you, I love you—and have from the first moment I met you."

She stood looking at him in a dazed manner.

"Leave me now," she commanded.

"I deserve to be banished," he said, "but Miss Simmons, for heaven's sake, do not send me away in anger. If you only knew—if you could only understand how much it means to me——"

She put out her hand to stop him.

"Please go now," she said scarcely above a whisper.

"I bow to your command," he said, "but before I go, tell me that you forgive me. Will you take my hand as a token?"

He held out his hand. She stood facing him, silent and immovable. Her face was flooded with emotion.

"Won't you go?" she said, at length.

He still held out his hand.

"I can't," he said, "till you have——"

She lifted her hand and touched his.

"You must go now!" she said.

For a brief moment the hand lingered in his, thrilling him to the very core. Then, with a low bow, he tore himself away and strode swiftly through flaming hollyhocks toward the gate, his heart beating tumultuously.

"I want you to marry me!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

A STARTLING REVELATION.

Dennis Quigley drove back to Mapleton, his mind in a maze of perplexity and doubt. But there still lingered in his memory the scene in the garden—the haunting perfume of the pinks, the sweet memory of a pair of dark eyes and the touch of a hand that still thrilled him with the joys of youth and love. Strive as he would, he could not banish from his memory the slender form, the dark, witching face of the girl he had left standing amid the flaming hollyhocks, and the look on her face haunted him and filled him with a vague and indefinable sense of dread.

On his return to Mapleton he strolled about the village, his mind ill at ease. It was near the middle of the afternoon, as he was walking with the landlord of the Black Bear from the postoffice, that a vehicle containing two persons drew up in front of the inn. As they alighted and entered the Black Bear, Quigley recognized James Huddleson. The other, a man of middle age, apparently, was unknown to the reporter.

As Quigley and the landlord entered the inn they found Huddleson in the office. He got up and leaned on his crutches while he shook hands with the landlord and Quigley.

"Mr. Bartwell," he said, "we have come on a matter of business which requires the services of a justice of the peace. Is there one in the village?"

"Justice Hobson is right across the street. I will bring him if you wish."

"If you please, I wish you would. We shall be waiting for him in the parlor."

"I'll have him here in a jiffy," replied the landlord, and he hurried out and across the street.

Quigley was turning away when Huddleson stopped him.

"Mr. Quigley," he said, "the business on hand is something you will probably be interested in, and we should like to have you remain, if you care to."

"I shall consider it a pleasure," assured Quigley.

"Very well. I don't mind telling you that the matter relates to the Mortimer Dent affair."

Quigley was speechless with amazement.

"You are a reporter, I understand," went on Huddleson, "and reporters, as a rule, draw on their imagination. I believe that you are not of that kind. Therefore, we have decided to ask you to be present when the whole matter is brought to light."

"I appreciate your confidence more than I can express," cried Quigley, "and I assure you that not a word shall be written that does not meet with your approval."

"Then you can come into the parlor with me when the justice arrives."

At this juncture Bartwell returned accompanied by the justice of the peace.

"I have a man with me who desires to make a statement," said Huddleson to the justice, "which will clear up the mystery surrounding the Mortimer Dent case."

"Indeed!" cried the justice. "That is interesting. I shall be very glad, indeed, to hear his statement. Did you say that the gentleman was here?"

"He is waiting in the parlor. Come in."

The justice and Quigley followed Huddleson into the parlor, where a stranger of some forty years, his face covered with a short beard, sat by an open window at the far end of the room. As they entered Huddleson closed the door behind them.

"In order to keep down any undue excitement," he said, "we have thought it best to conduct this matter with as little publicity as possible. In fact," continued Huddleson, lowering his voice, "we have the chief actor in the case here and in addition to making his statement, he desires to surrender himself to the law."

The justice was visibly excited, and there was a look of sudden fear in his face as he sank into the chair placed at his disposal.

"Do you mean that—the murderer is here and desires to confess?" he gasped.

"I will let him speak for himself," replied Huddleson. He turned to the stranger who approached and stood before the justice.

"I am glad to meet you," he said, extending his hand. "Mr. Huddleson has told you that I desire to make a statement—or more properly speaking, a confession."

"Quite right," nodded the justice. "Please be seated. I am ready to listen to what you have to say—very glad, indeed," he added, a little nervously. "What is your name, please?"

"My name," replied the stranger, "is Mortimer Dent!"

The justice almost fell from his chair. He stared at the speaker as if stupefied, his face the color of ashes. And Dennis Quigley, like one in a dream, heard the words of the stranger and stood there motionless, in silence, the name of Mortimer Dent ringing in his ears.

(Continued on page thirteen.)

"What makes you think I am in trouble?"

Jealous of Herself;

Or, BERENICE'S MYSTERIOUS FLIGHT

By AGNES DOROTHY CAMP

He was grasped from behind.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE following month was a feverish, dragging time for the young chaplain. No answer came from Amabel and Berenice's letters ceased entirely. His cheeks became thinner and his step slow. His frequent attacks of chills and fever made Doctor Ferguson anxious, but the young man pooh-poohed any suggestion in regard to his health, and refused to discuss his symptoms. He took the proferred medicine however, and the Doctor tactfully changed the subject.

From inquiries they learned that the Spaniard, whose name was Celasquex, was the son of a Spanish noble who had been expelled from his country for intriguing in high affairs. Now it was believed he had allied with the natives against the occupancy of the Americans. They had seen nothing of him since the night at the hotel, and in fact, had almost forgotten him.

Jerome had conceived a fondness for the jungle, and he would mount an old pony and ride for hours to find a secluded spot.

"I don't like the idea of your going so far alone," said Doctor Ferguson one day. "You seem to forget how treacherous the Filipinos are. They are taking advantage of the time to settle personal grievances, and pilfer from travelers."

Jerome was silent, an absorbed expression in his dark eyes, and there was a drawn look about the well-shaped mouth. "As a non-combatant I'm safe enough," he answered, confidently. "I have no personal enemies, and I never carry valuables. So you see your fears are groundless. There's absolutely no reason for attacking me."

Doctor Ferguson did not press his argument, but he said afterward that if it hadn't been womanish he would have confessed to a presentiment of approaching evil when he saw the young chaplain mount the stocky little pony and ride away.

The gray day made Jerome dizzy. But he rode along, thinking of the girl he loved, as he always did on these solitary rides. As midday approached, the heat became intense. Even in the dim swamp-land of the jungle the hot blasts seemed undiminished by the chill of the vast moist surfaces.

But Jerome rode on regardless alike of heat and chill. He was reviewing, the past eight months, and he was feeling a little resentment toward his parents. Though he had made no complaints and refused to discuss his health even with Doctor Ferguson, he had to admit to himself that his banishment had been all a miserable failure. It would take years, if ever, to get the malaria out of his system, and he had lost Berenice besides. That he had lost her Jerome was almost certain, though nobody had said so. Jack Bradley knew, the Doctor had been told, and his parents were in possession of the facts. He knew because they never mentioned her.

His soul rose in revolt against the conspiracy. Poor little Berenice! Who were they that they should make terms, just because she belonged to an objectionable profession. He recalled how earnestly she had begged to be brought along. He had no hard feelings toward her. He blamed himself for leaving her. Their terms had been despotic.

The blazing, blistering sun scorched Jerome's face and hands, but he rode stubbornly on through mangrove swamp and salt-water forests of trees growing in spongy slime. Creeping things and curious birds came and went underfoot and overhead. Fairchild stopped and looked back the way he had ridden. He thought he heard horses' hoofs. Only the huts dotted here and there among cocoanut trees and banana palms, and the jungle-covered hills, were seen. A bevy of native women were doing their washing in the bay. Several thick-lipped, yellow-skinned men had been lounging near where Jerome passed. He noticed that they had disappeared and were nowhere in sight.

He turned quickly. Did his ears deceive him again, or was that a small brown man that disappeared in the underbrush at his left? He called sharply, but there was no response. Jerome remounted his pony, and rode slowly on. He thought he was getting fanciful, but he could not understand the uncanny silence following his call. It seemed not only the silence of suspended movement but of suspended breathing. He recalled an experience during his college days when some friends surprised him in his rooms. While Jerome was out the men had entered and set the table with delicacies received from some of their homes, then they had turned out the light and sat around the table waiting for their host's return.

When Jerome entered the room later and fumbled around for a match while the men sat with bated breath, he felt the same uncanny silence that he was experiencing now. Again he looked over his shoulder. This time he was not mistaken. A small form crept stealthily back to the underbrush. Once more Fairchild dismounted and walked back in the direction the man had taken, but before he had gone many steps he was grasped from behind. His hands were pinioned to his side, and a coarse bandage was thrown over his eyes.

The prisoner was unable to find out how many men there were in the party, but from the shuffling of feet he thought there must be at least three or four. He knew that he stood no chance against such a number, particularly as he was blindfolded. But he fought desperately with all his Yankee spunk, which had survived his strength and brawn.

So far not a word had been spoken, and Jerome, supposing they were a band of marauding hillmen, wondered whether they would kill him in their anger when they found that he carried no money or valuables. He continued to struggle with his captors. Suddenly an opposing yell from the direction whence he had come made him think for a moment that assistance was at hand. But he was not left in suspense long, for the newcomer, or newcomers, only vociferated in native dialect. In a scuffle that followed Jerome was struck on the head and promptly lost all interest in the contention.

A short, stocky Filipino had dogged every step of Jerome's for many days. As soon as the men attacked the young chaplain he stole swiftly out of the bush to where they were struggling. His eyes were strained and his teeth were gritted wickedly. It was Punto Puntos the Filipino whom the American officers had revived and nursed back to life, after he had been wounded by a hasty shot from a sentry. With a yell of rage he sprang like a panther at the throat of one of the assailants, who, instead of being hillmen, as Jerome had suspected, were three Spanish desperadoes.

Punto Puntos flew from one to the other like a wildcat. He scratched bit, and clawed, until thoroughly overcome he fell to the ground over the body of Fairchild. The ruffians gave him several parting kicks, after rolling him from the body of the chaplain. This they turned over to make sure he was dead, and then, without any attempt at robbery, they fled into the jungle.

How long Fairchild and Punto Puntos lay unconscious was never known. Finally Puntos opened his eyes and stared dully at the misty sky. By degrees he turned his head so that his eyes fell on the prostrate form of the American. He had good reason to think that Jerome Fairchild was dead, for he lay with pallid cheeks and big staring eyes, and a crimson stream trickled down from his forehead.

With a superhuman effort Puntos managed to crawl over to the other man. He brushed the unsightly moisture from the damp brow. Avoiding Jerome's white face he turned him over and examined his wound. Besides the gash in the temple there was an ugly knife wound in the back, and if he was not already dead he would soon bleed to death.

Puntos tore off some of his coarse clothing, which, thanks to the civilization he had enjoyed in the hospital, was clean, and tried to assuage the exhausting drain. After awhile he was rewarded, for the chaplain showed signs of life, but no return to consciousness. Puntos dragged the inanimate form out of the broiling sun's rays under the shadow of hummocks and clumps of tall grass almost concealing it from any one passing on the narrow roadway. Then, with a faint voice, he breathed into Jerome's ear:

"I'll return soon. I go for help."

With ashen face the faithful native dragged his bruised and torn limbs in the direction from which they had come. The journey for help was memorable for the length and pain of every step, but Puntos struggled on. An hour later a scouting party saw a mass of rags and blood with a haggard face approaching them. They viewed the object briefly and would have ridden on without further notice, but something about the imploring attitude attracted Doctor Ferguson's attention.

"Does he remind you of anything?" he asked Captain Bradley, who was riding at his side.

The young officer shrugged his shoulders, and the half-naked, footsore creature limped into their midst. He was covered with cuts and scratches. One eye was closed and black. He stood crossing himself reverently with one hand, while with the other he pointed in the direction where lay the almost lifeless form of Jerome.

Captain Bradley recognized Punto Puntos, and immediately jumping from his pony demanded to know what had occurred. Puntos was almost speechless from fright and exhaustion, and could only motion the officers to follow him. Doctor Ferguson, although sickened at the sight of poor Puntos, threw the half-dead native over his pony, after pouring some brandy down his throat, and ordered him to lead the way. The march began.

In a little while Puntos revived by the brandy told all that had happened, finishing by whispering the name of Celasquex. Doctor Ferguson started. Instantly he recalled the offensive Spaniard.

"Are you sure?" he cried, in astonished tones.

Puntos nodded affirmatively. Captain Bradley, riding on the other side of the Filipino, listened breathlessly to his words.

"A week ago," Puntos explained, "I saw Celasquex in close conversation with the three Spaniards. I suspected something wrong, because he pointed out Mr. Fairchild, and I've watched them ever since. I follow Mr. Fairchild wherever he goes, and it was well I did. If I hadn't been near today, he would have died, and the wild beasts would have devoured his body, and we'd never know it."

Doctor Ferguson shuddered in horror at the grewsome picture, but remembering that his friend was as good as dead, and at any rate unable to defend himself from the wild beasts, he urged on his pony, and the rest followed closely.

"Celasquex is very powerful among the hillmen, and he has many followers," declared Puntos in his odd, broken English way.

"Puntos is right," said Captain Bradley, soberly. "Celasquex is the most dangerous man in the island."

"But why should he instigate an attack on Fairchild," asked Doctor Ferguson, in puzzled tones.

Captain Bradley leaned over in his saddle and whispered two words in the astonished Doctor's ears.

"Jealousy—Berenice!" echoed the Doctor. "Fairchild doesn't even know the beast."

Captain Bradley smiled grimly.

"He doesn't have to," he replied. "The fact that Berenice threw Celasquex over for him was sufficient for that type of Spaniard who thinks that if a mindless woman refuses to love him the proper thing for him to do is to kill the person she thinks she loves. And if that doesn't bring her to time he must kill her, and so have peace of mind."

Ferguson was silent. He recalled Jerome's words about seeing the Spaniard before.

"I suppose," he said after awhile, "the bloodthirsty rascal followed us down here."

"No, no," Captain Bradley replied, very promptly. "Celasquex came down as soon as the trouble started, and right after Jerome met Berenice. Celasquex is a good hater, and his hatred will feed on delay. He is the kind that waits years for revenge. But as Fairchild walked right in, the Spaniard couldn't resist springing the trap. He has plenty of tools down here, and the risk is not so great. He is taking advantage of the times."

Meanwhile, the sun with his blinding heat had disappeared, and the cool stirring air of evening was flooding the jungle. The sky was thick with the sinking day. The scouting party were realizing what a distance the native had traveled in his wretched condition. Then Doctor Ferguson, who had never taken his eyes from the set, pallid face of the little brown man, urged his horse forward, for a drawn look of excitement had overspread Punto's face. He had rolled from his pony and was clutching at roots and vines, which the terrific heat of the day had sunk into, leaving the foliage crisp and hot.

Suddenly he turned with a loud cry of failure. The party gathered around, looking expectantly at the half-demented native.

"He is gone!" he sobbed. "They have taken him away."

There was no doubt about it. The young chaplain's body had disappeared. Captain Bradley found his cap, and Doctor Ferguson made a careful examination of the stains on the ground. The men looked at one another in mute impotence, and Punto ran around, crossing himself as he ran, peering into underbrush and moist tangle, springing deftly after footprints, and returning a moment later dejected and forlorn.

"Thank the good God," he murmured at last, "the wild beasts haven't devoured him!"

Each man, fearing to give expression to his thought, gave a sigh of relief.

"How are you so sure?" asked Doctor Ferguson, wiping the moisture from his brow.

"No trace of animals," answered Puntos. "Celasquex has paid hillmen to remove Mr. Fairchild. Now we must find the hillmen. They are crueler than wild beasts."

"But night is coming on. In an hour we'll not be able to find our way out of the jungle, and we shall gain nothing by staying here," declared Captain Bradley. "Forward, boys!" he shouted, with his old tone of command. "We'll find Jerome Fairchild before many hours, or this old jungle shall reek with something besides fungi, and every lamp-post in Manila shall be decorated with a dead Spaniard or hillman."

Instantly every man was in his saddle. Suddenly excited voices reached them, and a challenge as loud as Captain Bradley's "forward" was heard.

"Halt."

Another moment, and the rest of the scouting party who had taken another route, advanced carrying Jerome on a rude litter.

Doctor Ferguson hurriedly poured brandy into his mouth and chafed his hands, while the newcomers explained how they had come upon the unconscious form about a quarter of a mile away. As there were no footmarks near, they concluded that he had been attacked and left for dead, and later, when consciousness returned, had started to walk, but had fallen from exhaustion. This coincided with Punto's story. But it was many weeks before the real truth was known.

CHAPTER VII.

Berenice Marther stood in her cousin's room, an open letter in her hand. From the raised eyes and puckered brow it was impossible to read the emotions surging through the unsteady heart of the petted and half-spoiled beauty. Her eyes fell once more on the masculine handwriting. It was addressed to Amabel, and read as follows:

"Dear Miss Marther:—Is there any influence, human or divine, that may be brought to bear on your cousin, Miss Berenice, to induce her to write to Jerome Fairchild? He is dangerously ill—perhaps dying—from a wound. His recovery is retarded by a severe attack of malaria. Can you not persuade your cousin to write him a cheerful letter, if only to make believe that she still cares for him? He is so desperately ill I'm writing this as a last resource, hoping that some good will result. Trusting that you will pardon the liberty, and thanking you in anticipation,

"I am yours sincerely,

"CLEMENT FERGUSON."

"So," murmured the girl, "that is why Amabel lectured me this morning. That's why she is going to desert me and go back to her nursing."

She stood lost in thought, trying all the time to get a grip on her consciousness. But she could only feel. Through the confusion that deadened her mind she felt with wonderful clearness Jerome's strong arms around her, his cheek pressed against her own, his warm kisses on her lips.

For awhile she paced the room but these thoughts were always with her—sometimes alone, again converging with vivid pictures of his handsome, athletic form mutilated by wounds and consumed with malarial fever. In a few days—at the longest—weeks, Amabel would be at his side, bathing his fevered brow, moistening his parched lips. When at last she formed the thought it brought to her for the first time the cruel stings of jealousy.

Stricken with sudden fear that Jerome would come to love the hands that nursed him back to life she walked to and fro at a furious pace. Then, remembering another man to whom she must soon keep a promise, a soft laugh punctuated the long meditation. She turned and slowly resumed her pacing.

A footstep was audible in the passage. Berenice dropped carelessly upon a divan. A second later Amabel entered the room. She glanced anxiously from the open letter lying exactly where she had left it, to the closed eyes and placid face of her cousin.

When a moment later Berenice opened her eyes and yawned, there was nothing in the innocent face she turned to Amabel that would lead the girl to suspect that she knew the contents of the open letter.

"I came here to look for you, Amabel. I was so tired, and your divan looked so inviting, I just couldn't resist the temptation to flop down," she said easily.

Amabel looked searchingly at the luxurious little figure curled up Hottentot fashion on the comfortable lounge.

"Cold, selfish little wretch," thought Amabel. But aloud she said: "Have you thought of what we talked about this morning, Berenice?"

Berenice stretched indolently.

"Oh, yes," she replied drowsily. "I have thought until my head aches. Now, dear Amabel, do forget it and don't make a bore of yourself."

Amabel bit her lip impatiently.

"Then you won't write to Jerome?" she asked.

Berenice sat bolt upright, her eyes aglow with a mysterious fire.

"How can I express my feelings for him in a letter?" she demanded, passionately.

"You have expressed a variety of feelings for him in the past. To which of those feelings are you referring? Am I to understand it's the burning love of a year ago, or the withering contempt of a few months later?" asked Amabel, coldly.

Berenice winced.

"Whichever you choose," she said, inscrutably.

The gentle-hearted Amabel could never bear indifference from her cousin. She went over to her and would have thrown her arms around her. "Oh, Berenice!" she began. But Berenice for once threw her off, at the same time turning flashing eyes upon her cousin.

"You love Jerome, yourself," she flared. "Why don't you write to him? You know you are going down to the Philippines to nurse him—deny it if you dare."

Amabel shrank from the angry eyes. It was true she had made plans to go to Manila, but not to nurse Jerome. Indeed, she had no idea when the plans were made that Jerome needed nursing.

Her heart went out in pity, and something more, for the brave true heart that had loved and trusted her fickle cousin. But rather than let Berenice know it she would give up the idea of going to the Philippines.

"I do deny it." She pronounced the words calmly, as if there was not a wild throbbing at her heart, and a bitter word on her tongue.

Berenice smiled skeptically.

"I shall not go to Manila," Amabel resumed. "And as a last word on the subject, let me say, Berenice, that I wouldn't have your 'dog-in-the-manger' disposition for worlds."

Without waiting for her cousin to reply she hurried from the room. An hour later the servant saw her descending the stairs, suitcase in hand. Restraining her curiosity, she opened the front door, and without a word of explanation Amabel left the house. That same evening Stephen Marther received his favorite niece with open arms.

"It's good for failing eyesight to see you home again, my dear," he exclaimed jocosely. To which Amabel sobbed a few inarticulate words on his shoulder.

Two days later Mrs. Fairchild and Julia Parks made their long-deferred call at Berenice's cottage. It had caused the good woman many qualms of conscience to take her own niece into such a den of iniquity. But as she explained to the rector, "As the strange girl insists upon being a nurse and will be exposed to all kinds of contagion, she oughtn't to be contaminated with one visit."

Without at all understanding his wife's reasoning, the minister coincided, and said that he daresay the risk to her niece physically or morally was slight.

The small house which the cousins had taken was situated just above the Harlem River on a sparsely built street, their house being the only one on the block. One maid, with the assistance of a man for outside work, did the entire work of the house. She was an "old-young" girl of thirty-five, and the sister of the "young-old" man of forty who nursed the flowers in summer and the furnace in winter.

As Mrs. Fairchild's carriage rumbled along the street two boys with raucous voices yelled "Extra, extra!"

"Dear me," she said, "such dreadful voices! What possible interest has this quiet community in any extra horror that may have occurred in the city."

Julia shook her head. "I don't know, auntie," she said, "but I should think that at night this place would be dark and creepy enough fer any horror."

Mrs. Fairchild shivered and drew her cloak around her.

"I suppose, as a nurse, you will delight in dead bodies and grewsome sights," she said pettishly. "But I think you might spare my feelings and not talk about such things on a lonely country road——"

"Extra, extra!"

A dirty urchin ran alongside of the carriage, as it drew up at Berenice's door.

"Extra, lady? Mysterious disappearance! Murder or suicide. Extra, lady?"

"Go away, you dreadful boy," cried the rector's wife, hurrying past the newsboy up to the door of the house, closely followed by her niece.

The door was opened before Mrs. Fairchild had time to ring the bell, by a stolid, though keen-eyed, woman servant.

Standing close behind the woman was a tall, broad-shouldered individual, who had the "man in possession" written all over him. He promptly brushed the woman aside and addressed Mrs. Fairchild.

"Perhaps you've come to give us some information, lady," he said, not rudely, but with comfortable assurance.

Mrs. Fairchild drew herself up haughtily.

"What does the man mean?" she demanded of the astonished Julia.

"We want to see Miss Marther," Julia said, looking timidly at the big man.

"So does a few others," answered the stranger, with a gruff laugh.

But seeing the genuine amazement on the women's faces, he offered an explanation.

"Is it possible you haven't seen the papers?" he asked, pulling one from his pocket. "'Mysterious Disappearance of the Popular Actress, Berenice Marther'," read the man.

The rector's wife looked as if she had been waiting for something like this to complete her misery.

"Read on," she murmured faintly.

"'Either murder or suicide, as none of her clothes have been taken. Even the dress and slippers she was last seen in

"What was the subject you and your cousin disagreed about?"

were found hanging and lying about the rooms. Not a hat or a coat is missing from the actress's wardrobe. She was to have been married in a few weeks to Mr. Clement Knowlton, son of Professor Knowlton, of Boston."

Mrs. Fairchild gasped and leaned heavily on her niece at this unexpected revelation. But she sighed with intense relief when the story ended without any mention of Jerome Fairchild, son of the Reverend Jonathan Fairchild of New York. The good lady felt that God was merciful in sparing her such a terrible disgrace.

But she forgot that her only son lay wounded and fever-stricken in the Manila hospital, also to save her reverend name from discredit. As soon as she could command her voice, Mrs. Fairchild informed the man that she had no information to give, and truthfully added that she didn't even know the missing woman; that she had called at the earnest request of a mutual friend. Without giving her name, and hoping that she would escape recognition, the rector's wife, leaning on the arm of Julia, returned to the carriage.

"Clever old party," said the man to the woman servant, who had remained in the background, at the same time taking out his pocketbook and writing down "Mrs. J. Fairchild and niece." "Come here often?" he asked again, addressing the woman.

"Never saw them until today," she replied. "Who are they?"

The man told her.

"How did you know? She didn't tell you," said the servant, who was called Betsey.

"She didn't have to," avowed the detective. "It's my business to know everybody."

Just then two figures, a man and a woman, approached the house from opposite ends of the street. They met at the gate and ascended the few steps to the door. Again the watchful detective ordered the door opened before the astonished visitors had time to ring. Hawk, looking more vulturous than usual, squeezed himself past the detective, whose eyes were riveted on the woman, the last person he expected to see.

Amabel Marther would have swept past without a word, but seeing that the man had blocked her way at the foot of the stairs, she turned indignantly to Hawk.

"What is the meaning of this intrusion?" she demanded. "Where is my cousin?"

Hawk made no reply, but stood wringing his hands as if he were washing them. Amabel turned to the detective.

"Why doesn't he speak?" she repeated. "What are you doing here? And where is Miss Marther?"

The detective looked incredulous. "Don't you read the newspapers either?" he asked; and once more he pulled out the sensational sheet from his pocket. "Haven't you heard of the mysterious disappearance of the lady in question?" he added, handing her the newspaper.

Amabel skimmed over the startling headlines, and without reading the whole story tossed the paper back to the man, who was eying her curiously.

"It's ridiculous," she declared. "Miss Marther isn't the kind to commit suicide. Nobody would murder her, for she hasn't an enemy in the world. Come, Hawk—" she turned abruptly to that individual—"where's Berenice?"

"Honestly, Miss Marther, I don't know," said the manager, still nervously using invisible soap.

Just then Amabel noticed the woman Betsey in the background.

"Come here," she commanded. "Perhaps you can explain all this nonsense."

The detective led the way to a pretty reception-room opening with French windows on a tiny lawn, where a little dark red painted door afforded an entrance through a board fence leading into the next street. This door was used by tradesmen to deliver goods at the side door of the house.

Amabel's face was a shade paler than usual as she seated herself on the nearest chair.

"Now," she said, in her usually gentle tones, "tell me all about it, Betsey."

The woman looked grimly at her young mistress and her gray eyes shone like cold steel.

"You will remember," she began, "that it was Tuesday when you went away." Amabel nodded, and she went on. "After you went"—this in a sepulchral tone—"Miss Berenice was never heard of. I took her tea up at the regular time, and when she didn't answer my knock, I supposed she was sleeping and took it downstairs again. When dinner was ready, I rang the bell as usual and waited. She didn't come in twenty minutes, and I went upstairs. I saw her dressing gown and slippers, and I knew she was dressed. Then I looked in her room, and after that, all over the house. I didn't see how she could have got out of the house without me seeing, but supposed she did. So I put the dinner back and waited. I've been waiting ever since."

The big detective had not once taken his keen beady eyes from Amabel's face.

"So far as we can find out, Miss Marther, you are the last person who saw your cousin alive."

Amabel raised a white face to Hawk. The manager by this time was so nervous that he was literally bathing his face with imperceptible water. He looked so absurd rubbing his eyes with both hands, the girl could hardly restrain a smile.

"If this is a press notice," she said, resolutely, "I warn you to drop it. You've made enough on Berenice, and she doesn't need this advertising, just when she is giving up the profession. So you may as well drop it at once. Where is Berenice? I'm positive you know."

"Upon my honor, I don't know," protested Hawk. "She's missed two nights and a matinee, and Estelle is as clumsy as an—oh, oh, what has become of my star!"

Amabel turned from the self-interested manager and addressed her words to the detective.

"What have you done toward finding my cousin?" she asked.

"One of the first things was to look for you," he replied, meaningly.

"For me," she exclaimed. "Why for me? It's only by accident I'm here now. I left this house on Tuesday, never intending to return. But I had to come back for an important paper, which I shall need in my future work."

Amabel had not noticed the start which all three of her listeners gave when she said she had left the house never to reutrn.

The jetty eyes of the detective took on a new expression.

"So sweet and tender," he thought, "and yet so deep. And why were you leaving your cousin's house forever, Miss Marther?" he asked aloud.

"We had a disagreement, and she didn't need me any more."

Hawk leaned over and in affrighted tones whispered, "Be careful; don't make a statement. It will be used against you."

Amabel turned angrily on the cringing manager.

"What a consummate coward you are!" she flared. "I can say anything I please. Nothing can possibly be used against me."

"I hope so, indeed. I assure you I meant no harm," said Hawk.

"You see, miss," the detective resumed, "Professor Knowlton and Mr. Hawk have placed the case in our hands. We shall find Miss Berenice Marther, dead or alive, before many hours. If you are innocent, give us all the information you can. If not, well, nobody is expecting you to commit yourself. I think that's speaking fair and above board."

For the first time it dawned upon Amabel that she was in a trying position. She summed up the case in her mind. Berenice, not knowing that her cousin had forestalled her in leaving the house without saying good-by, had lit on the same idea. To punish Amabel she had played this trick, which was likely to cause lots of unpleasant notoriety for both.

Even now some disagreeable person might be inquiring for her at her uncle's home, where she would have been only that she remembered she had left her nurse's diploma in Berenice's house, and had returned to get it. She would be able, however, to give a satisfactory account of her movements, and prepared to answer the detective's questions.

"What was the subject you and your cousin disagreed about?" The question was put cynically. It was an unfortunate lead for Amabel was resolved not to bring Jerome's name into publicity if it could possibly be avoided. She hesitated.

"There were several things," she replied, evasively.

The detective was comprehensive.

"Will you tell me what they were?" he asked, methodically.

"I didn't approve of her staying in the theatrical profession, or of her marriage," she replied.

"But neither of these things was the real cause of your separation," said her tormentor.

"My cousin is very self-willed and either subject was sufficient for us to disagree and part on," fenced the girl.

The man saw that she was concealing something and was puzzled. But he hoped to trip her up later.

"I see," he said, running his fingers through his hair. "Now Miss Marther, will you go with us and see what your cousin wore—if she left the house wearing anything. Betsey says not a single item of her wardrobe is missing; you will be able to verify that.",

Amabel followed the men upstairs and Betsey remained on guard at the door. Just as the servant had stated, not a single garment was gone. Amabel even

(Continued on page nine.)

The Detective Barrier;

Or, HOW AND WHY

By WM. H. MANNING

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CHAPTER XI.

THE ENEMY STRIKES.

NETLEY was silent for some time, and then shook his head with an odd air of mingled gloom and obstinacy.

"Call it a marriage certificate if you will," he said slowly, "but I don't feel that Docia married Kendall."

"I admit that Docia did not talk like a widowed bride, but I see no insurmountable obstacle to the theory. She mentioned Kendall's 'offer,' as she called it. That may have been a suggestion from him that she invest her funds so he could have the handling of them. I don't claim it, for things were said to Varrick that I can't comprehend. The most puzzling and interesting is the reiterated wish to know what had become of 'it.' What did she mean? What is that mysterious 'it'?"

"We have been considering the possibility that Docia was married, 'it' may have been her marriage certificate."

"Ye-es," admitted Barford, reluctantly. "But, Netley, did you ever know a woman to part with a paper of that sort? The unwritten law is that it is her personal property, and she clings to it tenaciously."

"Suppose Docia's was stolen?"

"Possible, but——"

"I won't press the point, for I don't feel that it's the right guess. If she married Kendall, it was secretly, and she would hang to the certificate, in such a case, like a burr. Besides, there is Roland Varrick, who looks to me to be a lover. Oho! Roland, eh? Isn't it possible he is the real mischief maker? We've given him too little attention."

"Hardly, for I have inquired carefully as to his past, and without letting anybody suspect that I was curious. Varrick is well known here. He is of a well-to-do family, all of whom are respectable and influential. He is himself an orphan, with a comfortable income. Intelligent, well-educated, a social favorite, honest and otherwise law-abiding—that is his past. Personally, I do not vouch for the last few days."

"He is mixed up with things somehow."

"He is, and there's an ugly drift of events. The strange man and the stumpy-footed woman who came to the shack were expected by certain persons, how many I don't know. Docia and Varrick expected them. The young man pretended to have typhoid fever, so as to keep his bed. Dr. Brown, being his physician, must have been more or less in the deceit, which suggests that Brown may have a bad half-hour presently, if seriously questioned."

"I dare say he still says Kendall was killed with a rifle, but who uses noiseless powder hereabouts?"

"Pass that kind of powder by. Pass Brown by for now. To resume: The shack-couple were expected. Varrick goes to the shack by night, and in his stocking feet. He falls from the ledge and gets a sprained leg, and also loses his watch. Docia recovers all of it but the detached links. They are partners in—something!"

"Where do Kendall and the lock of red hair come in?" asked Netley, quickly.

"Just now, that is a poser. Criminals are of all sorts and conditions, but I am unwilling to believe Docia deliberately engaged the shack-folks to come here and kill Kendall. Netley, where did they have historical dark night? Was it in Egypt or Grandon?"

Barford chuckled with the lightness of one who easily throws off troublesome problems, and when he spoke again it was on a different subject.

"I wish," he said, "that I knew what Thomson found and carried to his hotel so carefully wrapped up in his coat."

"And I," Netley added, "wish I knew who made those square tracks in the plowed field. Chased by the shack-couple, the deformed footer galloped like a Derby winner for the village, leaving footprints a hundred per cent worse than those of the stumpy-footed woman. What feet, what feet!"

"We will know all that presently."

"Maybe you have noticed that I am studying feet ever since. Let me spot that queer tracker, human or animal, and you will hear me shout to beat a steam whistle."

Barford smiled and ignored the point, but soon went to his hotel and wrote a letter to Annabel. It directed her to get inside Docia's house on the pretext already mentioned and discover what matches were used there. As he went out, Netley touched his arm.

"There is Levi, the weak-minded errand boy. Get him to deliver it, and you will expedite matters."

"Scarcely safe. He was messenger for Docia on at least one occasion, and may be so friendly with her that he would tell of the commission. We don't want it known that we have business dealings with Annabel."

"I've got to confess that I didn't think of that, which is one on me. I reckon my mind—say, Barford, why couldn't we use Levi as a sort of trap? Get him to do some bogus work for us that would deceive the guilty persons into making a false move that would betray them?"

"That's worth thinking about," said Barford, slowly. "If we can fix things right our scheme would be masked, so to speak. We will bring the point up again. Now for the postoffice."

Going there he had the good fortune to find Annabel present, inquiring for business letters she did not expect, and, without addressing a word to her, he managed to slip his note secretly into her hand. The unwished for delay was avoided.

His next step was to look more sharply into Kendall's movements on the day that had ended in the fatal night. Earlier investigation seemed to have covered that point, for nobody had been found that would admit having seen Kendall abroad during that day or evening, but the story of Rich, the cabman, had revealed a good-sized flaw in the evidence.

Rich had brought Kendall home in the middle of the afternoon. This being so, it was not impossible that somebody had seen the lumberman outside his house after his six o'clock dinner. If so, information was deliberately withheld, and somebody was shielding the guilty person.

This plan was all very well, but satisfactory results were lacking. When night fell, the detectives found themselves no wiser than before, and they finally decided to retire early and get the benefit of refreshing sleep.

Going, their way was past the Lettington house, and as Barford saw it nestling in its grounds, tree-dotted and shrub-ornamented, he suddenly determined upon new action. The Lettingtons lived well away from the Kendall house, and as they had not been publicly mentioned, there had been no questioning of them and no visits to their premises.

"Netley," said the chief detective, "go ahead alone, enter the hotel and listen in the lobby. Idle talk of outsiders is sometimes unexpectedly illuminating. Meanwhile, I want to slip quietly into the grounds yonder and see if anything can be noticed that's important."

They separated, and Barford carried out his plan. It was easy to enter the Lettington lot secretly, and he was soon near the rear of the premises.

"Somebody does know!" cried Docia.

Nothing could be more peaceful in outward seeming than Docia's home. The rather large house stood as if asleep, few rooms being lighted and all quiet. Windows were generally open above the lower floor, but no sounds floated to Barford's ears. As far as he could detect, he had the grounds to himself, and though the trees and shrubbery threw deep shadows in nearly every quarter, the odor of flowers was like the voice of peace and innocence.

He walked slowly across the premises, alert and ready to seize upon trifles, but discovered nothing worth taking to mind. Other houses were beyond, and, a few rods distant, his hotel. This building thrust its rear back of all the houses, and he saw the lights glimmering in various windows, but no immediate signs of life.

It was mere chance that his glance fell and that he saw a rear door open and somebody come out quickly. Back of the house-lot was a field where the rising ground made building impracticable, and the person flitted lightly across this dark field. It was a woman.

She crossed the intervening space, reached the Lettington premises, opened a gate, entered the grounds, and moved toward the house. Obscure as the night was, Barford required no explanation of her identity. The slight figure was familiar, its grace of movement was a reminder of previous occasions, and view of her face was not essential. She was Docia.

Her feet played briskly, lightly, and she reached her house and disappeared inside. Barford had seen, but he knew of no reason why he should interfere. If she was inclined to visit the hotel and leave by the rear door, what of it? He had no adverse criticism at hand, but he suddenly found himself possessed of a vague impression that her absence meant something out of the ordinary, the matter took hold upon his mind, turning what looked to be trivial into doubt. But why? He failed to answer that mental question.

Five minutes longer he delayed, and then left the place and walked to the hotel. Netley was not in the lobby, so Barford mounted to their rooms. The building was narrow and high, and their quarters were on the third floor. Arriving there he had a surprise. For the first time in the evening since their coming to town the floor was dark.

He opened Netley's room, and, finding it, too, without light, called his name. There was no reply, and he did not at once find interest in a distant hammering. Taking matters into his own hands, he turned on light both in the corridor and their two rooms. Netley was not visible.

In his own quarters something else was visible. The few things he had brought in his grip were scattered in confusion, instead of being neatly packed as he had left them, and the bed was in equal confusion. Barford scowled and then, having a sense of humor, smiled a trifle.

"A raid!" he muttered. "The enemy is not going to let me do all the active work in the game. But where the deuce is Netley!"

CHAPTER XII.

WHAT DID SHE SAY?

The hammering sound was renewed, and Barford hurried from the room and looked along the empty corridor. The blows were growing more emphatic, and they had a familiar ring as if a door was being struck. A door was trembling under angry knocking, and as the key was in the lock Barford gave it a twist and flung the barrier open. Netley was there, his eyes wild and his face contorted with wrath.

"What the howling dervishes does this mean?" spluttered the assistant. "Is this hotel a Bastile, and is it run by Bluebeard and Captain Kidd? Am I a bedstead to be packed away like this?"

"What," asked Barford, in return, "are you doing in another man's room?"

"I don't know anything about another roomer, but I've been put in there like dried apples ready for the pie. What the riotous blazes is this old hotel, anyhow?"

"Did somebody lock you in?"

"If my guess is any good, they sure did! Flung me in like a bag of potatoes, and turned the key on me. I had a good mind to smash the whole piratical outfit."

Netley was comical in his indignation, but his chief did not smile. He led his helper to his own quarters and placed a chair for him.

"Now, then," he said, "let's hear all about it."

Netley began to feel a bit ashamed of his outburst, and he took up the narrative promptly.

"I came this way, as you directed, but thought I could listen more reasonably to the talk below if I had a cigar as excuse. As there was a good supply in my room I came up to get one, rather than buy another. The hall was dark, and as I believed it due to over-economy on the part of the landlord—I've given up that idea since—I walked along to turn on the light. First thing I knew somebody had me gripped fast, and I was flung into the room where you found me. I tumbled over and received a lusty crack on the head from the bed or something else, and it practically stunned me. I was so dazed I was long in remembering whether I was Netley or the bellboy. When I did remember I began pounding on the door, and finally you came. What does it mean?"

"Netley, do you see this disordered room?"

"Say, was it a cyclone?"

"It was a raid. Our rooms have been invaded and turned upside down."

"Oho! so they were after something. What?"

"I venture to say nothing has been stolen——"

"Thomson did it!"

"Wrong! Our rival is not above keen enterprise, but not of this sort. Netley, a person knowing to the tragedy in Grandon—not necessarily the slayer of Kendall, though—has been here to see what we had in our possession."

"If we only knew who——"

"Docia Lettington is her name!"

"Her! Why, man, it was a male biped who tackled me."

"Granted! What was he like?"

"Too dark to see, but I had the impression that he was an oldish fellow, with coarse clothes and gray hair. Either I saw enough to know that or I dreamed it, and this isn't my night to dream."

"Then it wasn't Varrick."

"Still harping on Docia! Why?"

"Because she has been in the hotel and left by the rear way."

"You think that proves——"

"Very nearly. Docia has something she wants to find. Its absence worries her seriously. She is painfully eager to find it—'it,' you understand—though what 'it' is I don't know. She acted on the theory that perhaps we had found the lost object."

A long talk failed to put any other face to the matter. Nothing had been stolen, but a search had been made for a desired article. Undoubtedly, the confusion in the two rooms was due to the unexpected arrival of Netley at the hotel. He had probably been seen as he entered, so the rooms were necessarily left unsettled to facilitate flight.

And it was Barford's theory that the girl's unknown helper had made her retreat more certain by disposing of Netley. It had surely prevented pursuit long enough to do the work.

"Well, now," asked the assistant, final-

ly, "what are we going to do about it?"

"Nothing! We are not harmed, and any hostile step against those we may safely suspect would show them that we do suspect. We will leave them alone and charge this up to profit and loss. Later, we'll see which of the two it is. It may be of profit to us."

It was settled this way, and as Barford was certain the girl's accomplice had, like herself, slipped into the hotel by the rear way, nothing was said to the landlord. It was well to ignore the affair.

During a wakeful hour, that night, the detective formed a plan, and as soon as he finished breakfast, in the morning, he proceeded to act upon it. Dropping Netley for the time, he walked past the Kendall house, and was soon knocking at the door of the next house.

Its tenant was named Mrs. Cardell. She had already been questioned, and her answer was that she had seen nothing and heard nothing unusual, and, more important, that she had not seen Kendall during the entire twenty-four hours preceding his death. As she was the nearest neighbor, and especially as she had a clear view from her windows of both the front and rear piazzas of the lumberman's dwelling, Barford had grown suspicious that she was not telling all she knew.

This impression was confirmed by the uneasy shadow that crossed her face when she saw who her caller was, but she was quickly mistress of her emotions. Necessarily, she invited the detective in, but she was quickly to learn that his way of dealing with her had changed.

Once seated he looked her straight in the eyes.

"I've come, Mrs. Cardell," he announced, "to hear exactly what you saw the night of Harden Kendall's death."

"Eh?" she cried, half starting up. "Why, I saw nothing. I was indoors, and if there was anything to see I had no chance to see it——"

"You say you didn't see Kendall that day. How about the time he spoke to you?"

Here was a hazardous venture. Barford knew of no such speaking, but Kendall had been there, and Mrs. Cardell sat a good deal by the window hard by. The detective had risked a bold cast. The lady's face fell noticeably.

"How," she asked wonderingly, "did you know that?"

"It is my business to know things, madam. That's what I'm in town for, you know. Just who told me I do not feel like saying, for the secrets of honest witnesses must be guarded. What I want from you is a statement of what you know, for you are better placed than anybody else to inform me."

"Mr. Kendall didn't say a word except to remark, as I was watering my geraniums, that if the weather didn't improve there would be very few flowers for me to smell of, this year. Not another word."

"So much for that. Now, about what you saw?"

"Why, I saw him pass along right away——"

"I don't mean any simple thing like that. Give me the mystery, the suggestive part of the night."

The invitation was plain, but Mrs. Cardell was not eager to comply with the request. For ten minutes she fenced neatly with the detective, but it became so evident to him that she was avoiding frankness that he held stoutly to the point and struggled for light. Believing that she would be more likely to shield a neighbor than anybody else, he rescued on another plunge into hazards.

"Really, we are losing time in this duel of words, madam, and it is useless. Truth will serve you better than evasions, for evasions sometimes draw suspicion on the person who won't tell. Now then, just what did Miss Martha Belden do?"

"It wasn't she—I mean, I didn't see her that evening."

"Then it was her sister Dorcas?"

"Ye-es," was the reluctant answer, and the witness sighed. Suddenly she changed expression and forcibly added: "I don't care much for Martha, but I believe her to be a law-abiding person. Dorcas is hot-tempered. Well, she did strike Harden Kendall, and she—she said——"

"Yes?" spoke Barford gently, as the witness paused. "What did she say?"

CHAPTER XIII.

A WOMAN'S THREAT.

Mrs. Cardell ignored the question and sat silent and, plainly, deeply troubled. Under the battery of Barford's persistent interrogation she had finally betrayed a part of her secret, but she grew scared at her betrayal, and very sorry.

The detective was not disposed to humor scruples that interfered with the progress of law and justice, and he twice repeated his question. At the second attempt there was a threat of sternness that showed the lady the folly of further struggling against unkind fate.

"What," Barford demanded, "did Dorcas say to Kendall after she struck him?"

"Well," and Mrs. Cardell sighed again, "she said she would like to kill him!"

"And Dorcas has red hair?"

"Yes, but oh! sir, she never harmed Mr. Kendall. She was quick-tempered, and, being angry just then, she spoke rashly."

"Why did she strike him?"

"I suppose I may as well tell all I know, though my heart isn't in it. Dorcas meant nothing bad. I don't fully understand what the trouble was about, but it seems that Mr. Kendall had made a will that deprived Martha Belden of something she wanted."

"Just what was said?"

"Mr. Kendall came out of his house at a little before nine o'clock, and walked toward that half of his lot that borders on mine. He was alone when I first saw him, but Dorcas came running after him. She overtook him, and burst out angrily:

"'How dared you make that will and shut Martha out?'

"Mr. Kendall growled something I did not hear, and then he raised his voice and harshly added:

"'Now that the truth is known, I'll say that I'm going to do what I please with my own money—yes, and with my premises. You and your precious sister are going to pack up and get out. I won't have a pair of scheming bloodsuckers here!'

"Then," continued Mrs. Cardell in a trembling voice, "she struck him full in the face."

"And she said——"

"'I'd like to kill you, you villain!' She said that, but it has always been her way to burst out with foolish remarks. Dorcas never harmed Harden Kendall."

"What happened next?"

"Mr. Kendall half raised his hand as if to resent the blow, but he dropped it manfully, and, turning, walked away toward the street. Dorcas let him go, and herself returned to the house. That, sir, is really all I heard or saw. I didn't see the sisters after that, nor Mr. Kendall."

"You say he went toward the street?"

"Yes. There was a side gate there that he often used. I suppose he used it then, but I didn't stay to watch. I had seen too much, and heard too much. The less one knows about neighbors the better. I wish I had not been near that window then."

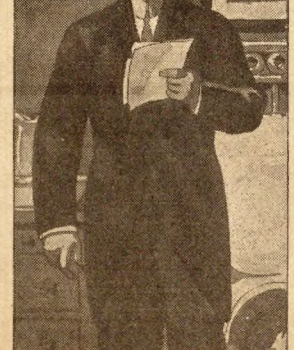
There was no way to doubt her regret, and she seemed to have told everything she knew, but Barford remained for some time longer, subjecting her to critical examination. When satisfied that further words were useless he took his departure. Mrs. Cardell followed to the door, and there repeated her declaration that Dorcas was innocent of everything but intemperate words, but Barford forgot the point, for then, as he walked away.

Certain things had become clear. Kendall had made a second will, and the fact had somehow come to the knowledge of the Belden sisters. Why, after being in such fear of Martha that he had signed a former will in which he devised ten thousand dollars to her, he should dare to defy Dorcas and threaten to turn her and Martha out of the house was not to be surmised. Leaving Dorcas behind he had gone to the street, and perhaps he had never set foot on his own premises again. Certainly, within a few hours he lay dead in the edge of the woods.

"Dorcas," mused the detective, "said that she would like to kill him. Dorcas has red hair."

Continuing, he reached the hotel and promptly wrote a letter to the district attorney in the city. The closing paragraph read as follows:

"See Kendall's office force and intimate friends again. Question them more critically. What has been Kendall's manner lately? Has he been visited by a strange man and a stumpy-footed woman?—the couple mentioned in my last letter. When did he leave the office, the fatal



"Here is a discovery!"

day? Why did he come to Grandon in the middle of the afternoon? Did he leave the office in a natural mood, or was he depressed? Did anybody inquire for him after he was gone? If so, who?"

When this letter was posted he returned to the hotel and sat with his assistant in a cloud of fragrant smoke.

"Netley," he said seriously, "we have got pretty nearly everybody in this State under suspicion now. If you can see the right thread in the black robe, point it out. Who disposed of Harden Kendall—yes, and why and how?"

"Anyhow, some folks would say it was time for an arrest," returned Netley, thoughtfully.

"Whom should we accuse?"

"You know I can't answer that puzzle, but an amateur would say, 'Arrest the whole lot of them.'"

"The law does not permit us to arrest anybody against whom there is no decisive evidence."

"Don't get the idea that I am advising it. Even if the law permitted, we should probably spoil our entire case by precipitation."

"I wish we knew just what Thomson thinks. Our esteemed rival goes and comes quietly, and we hear of his questioning this man and that man, but what he suspects does not appear to view," Barford admitted ruefully.

"I'd give a lead dollar to know what he carried to his hotel under his coat so mighty secretly. Say, is that the object Docia wants to find? Has Thomson got it?"

"I have considered that item, and decided against it. Granted that Thomson's trophy was a short rifle—I doubt that it was that—what interest could Docia have in it? No! Thomson picked up something he believed was connected with the hour of the crime, whereas, Docia probably desires something that harked back of the day's evening."

"We have before this discussed the likelihood that the man who, with the stumpy-footed woman, was briefly in the shack was a wood-chopper by calling, and knew the shanties well. Logging operations ended here a dozen years ago. The constable's picket told us that, since then, various transients have used the huts to avoid paying rent elsewhere. Who did he say these persons were—a clock-mender, a scientist who hunted bugs, a man who wanted to regain his lost health, a half-loony book-agent, together with gypsies and camping parties. Anything in it?"

"What do you make of it?"

"I was considering who knew so well where the shacks were."

"The list can be narrowed. The sick man and the scientist both died here and are buried out yonder. I'm told that the clock-mender appeared to be very honest, and the book-canvasser was too frail of body to be a successfully violent villain. The gypsies——"

"Yes?" said Netley, encouragingly.

"Let them rest in peace! All things are possible, but we don't get the mental war-cry of gypsy work. Be content, Netley; we have enough visible parties under suspicion to keep us busy. Pass the others by until they thrust a nose above the eastern horizon."

Conversation had lagged a little when Levi, the errand boy, suddenly appeared before them. His mild face was wreathed in a smile, and he pulled off his cap as he extended a letter.

"For you, sir," he announced.

Barford saw the writing and frowned. Annabel had written, and she had rashly engaged the boy as messenger. It was useless to ask Levi to keep silent, so the possibility that Annabel would become known as a detective aid grew the more threatening. If that happened, her usefulness ended.

He found there was nothing to be paid, so he dismissed the lad and read the letter.

"By Jupiter!" he exclaimed, "here is a discovery!"

CHAPTER XIV.

IN FLIGHT.

The letter from Annabel read as follows:

"Having received your orders I went in person to the city, to hasten my experiment, and returned a full-fledged agent for a particular make of gas mantles. My third call was at the Lettington house. Docia received me very nicely —in fact, it seemed to me she welcomed a break in the present trend of her life.

"She looked pale, weary and harassed, but there was bravery in it all that won my admiration.

"She purchased a gas mantle. I burned off the coating, myself, after asking for a match. And, Mr. Barford, the match brought to me was the sort you mentioned, the Scharm and Wolffley Company's output, with its odd streaks of paint. I saw no other matches there.

"It is a well-regulated house; Miss Lettington is refined, highly intelligent, and delightful; her aunt is a dear old soul, and their servant has a face rich with kindness. I saw everything within eye-range, even to a bent pin on the carpet and a glove-buttoner hanging on a hook, but if sin walked there barefooted, I saw no sign of it. Give me another commission."

It was evident that Annabel had been very favorably impressed by her call, but Barford passed it by for then.

"That particular kind of matches," he mused, "is expensive, and it would surprise me to know that the shack-couple even had one. Deduction, it was not their match with which that thing was

(Continued on page nine.)

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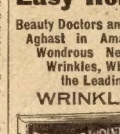

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Yost Middleton's Wife.

(Continued from page two.)

"I have kept no one posted." Stokes shrugged his shoulders. "He would have killed me in Milan if I had not slipped through his clutches. Yost Middleton is a maniac, I tell you. His wife's sin has turned him into a devil. Heavens! how he loved that woman, and if she had revealed the secret which she kept back, I wouldn't be here living from hand to mouth and fearing my own shadow."

"I don't care to have an inventory of your fears," growled the man in the chair, "they are nothing to me. Probably you needed a dagger in your back. Come, are you going to tell me?"

Stokes swallowed hard and attempted a sickly smile.

"You know Paris?" he began.

"As well as the born Parisian," was the reply.

"Do you know where the Hotel Pictus is?"

"What, is she there?" exclaimed the man, unable to keep back the glitter which flashed up in his eyes.

"They are there," answered Stokes. "What is so strange about that?"

"The Hotel Pictus is exclusive."

"Well, they are exclusive," grinned the valet. "Of course, they are not sailing under their true names. You will find that 'Mrs. Vorhees and daughter' are domiciled at the secluded little hotel, living apart from the world. Not only this, but Edith Middleton has a mission."

"Eh? To find and become reconciled to her husband?"

"No, to find the real murderer, to discover the person who committed the crime for which Mason Marx was tried in America."

"She still clings to the belief that Mason Marx was not guilty?"

"Yes. She would give all she possesses, and she is rich, to find that person."

"A bootless chase, no doubt," cried the man, lighting another cigarette.

"She doesn't think so," put in Stokes. "Does she think the object of her quest is in Paris?"

"I cannot tell you what she thinks, for I have no communication with her."

"I don't doubt that. You wouldn't be a very welcome visitor at the Hotel Pictus."

"At least I haven't been sent for," Stokes replied, with a hollow laugh.

The man rose and pushed back his chair. "The money is yours," he said with a sweep of his hand. "I deal fair, Barry Stokes."

Stokes watched him in dead silence for a moment.

"Perhaps it is not for me to ask questions," he began, when the man waved him into silence.

"Doubtless if you did, I would keep my own counsel," he laughed. "I wish you good luck, Stokes. We may never meet again."

In another moment the bank notes were in Stokes' possession and he was alone with his blood money. Still gripping the money he went to the window and saw the man emerge from the house.

"Heavens!" he said to himself. "What if that were the man Edith wants to find. He calls himself Blake Abernathy, and he wants to find Edith Middleton for some purpose. By Jove! If I dared enter her presence, and there is a short cut to the Hotel Pictus, I might make another cool thousand by warning her. Not for Barry Stokes just yet. The last time I faced her, six months after the separation and in Florence, I thought my life hung on a slender thread. No, I won't face Edith Middleton just yet, but the girl's face charms me. It always did, though Edith would not look with favor upon my suit."

He hugged the franc notes to his heart and at last withdrew from the window.

"I'm going to break down every barrier in the end," he went on. "Don't you think I shall let a pretty face like Lemora escape me. I'll bring Edith to my feet in the end. She shall deal with me alone. I know she hates me with all her proud heart, and would sting me to death like a serpent, but I'll have the whip hand before I die, and she shall kneel at my feet and cast into my arms the young beauty whom she now guards so well."

There was a sudden rapping at the door. Stokes, with a blanched face, sprang to open it, and a slender boy faced him with a bit of paper in his hand. Stokes took the sealed message and withdrew. He went over to the light and hastily tore the envelope open. One glance mastered the contents:

"You leave Paris within twelve hours or become food for ravens.

"THE AVENGER."

Barry Stokes sank into a chair as white as a shroud.

CHAPTER IV.

AT THE HOTEL PICTUS.

"Lemora, darling?"

The beautiful young girl, who reclined on a rich divan raised her head and became all attention. Edith Middleton, who had been watching her in silence for some time, went on in a voice as rich as the voice of old, but with a sadness clearly perceptible.

"I shall go out tonight and if you are not afraid to remain here, I prefer to go out alone."

A look of protest surged up in the liquid depths of Lemora's brilliant eyes.

"I do not fear save for yourself," she answered, rising and coming over to where Edith sat.

"I hope our quest is nearly ended," Middleton's wife continued. "I trust soon to have the threads all in my hands and then—vengeance!" Her voice seemed to drop into a hiss.

Lemora threw her arms about the arched neck and looked down into the eyes that seemed to speak.

"You have not heard of him lately?" she asked.

Edith Middleton understood.

"I have no news of him," and she knew that if was of her husband she spoke. "I shall not think of him, God help me, till the mystery is cleared. It is of the other one I think, the one man who now occupies my thoughts."

Lemora disengaged her arms and fell back. She knew that Edith had been out into the gay city more than once alone. Why should she fear to trust her there again?

"I shall not be long away, dear," resumed Middleton's wife. "It is not a dangerous errand this time."

She began to prepare for her exit, watched with much solicitude by the fair girl. All at once Mrs. Middleton sprang toward Lemora, caught her in her arms and fervently kissed her.

"Your life is wrapped up in mine!" she exclaimed, passionately. "I have dragged you across the sea into this strange country, not from a whim of mine, but that you might be with me in the mad quest of my life. I have lost sight of the villain Stokes since I saw him in Milan, and if he had not slipped out of my sight like a guilty serpent I should have forgotten my womanhood and daggered him. There, dear, I shall not be absent long. Admit no visitors while I am gone."

Lemora saw her companion steal away, and then locked the door, or, at least, in her agitation thought she did. Left alone, she went back to the divan and throwing herself among its richness closed her eyes dreamily.

How long she slept or dozed she did not know. It was twilight when Edith went away, but now night had come, and the little chamber in the Hotel Pictus was almost dark. Lemora rose with a start and started across the carpet to the electric bulb. Her hand was almost within reach of it when a slight noise fell upon her ears, and with a gasp of alarm she turned to behold a man in the room.

He was rather tall and well clad. His sharp eyes, half hidden by strong brows, were silently regarding her, and she felt a tremor of fear take possession of her heart. Once she essayed to speak, but fear of that strange man deterred her.

"Can't you find the light?" he said, in a voice that rang for years afterward in her ears.

At that moment Lemora's hand found the gilded chain, and she switched on the glare with a little jerk.

"Who are you?" she exclaimed, looking into the dark orbs of her unsummoned visitor.

He paid not the slightest attention to her question.

"Are you alone, girl?" he asked.

"You can see for yourself" and Lemora's hand executed a sweeping gesture. "You will permit me to say that you have not been sent for."

"That I will admit, miss." He was smiling now, smiling with the mien of one who was not to be abashed by anything. "You are Mrs. Vorhees' daughter."

Lemora nodded without so much as parting her lips.

"Very well. When will madame return?"

"I cannot tell you."

"Did she not tell you when she would be back?"

"Since you have intruded, I am under no obligations to answer you."

The girl was becoming braver every second.

"Hoping that I shall not have to wait long for madame, I will put myself at my ease."

The very boldness of the dark-faced stranger annoyed and mystified the young girl.

"If you would call some other time, seeing that you pretend to have business with my mother——"

He interrupted her with a little laugh.

"Your mother!" he exclaimed. "Now, that is a pretty deception. I may have some business with you, miss."

Lemora threw a hasty look toward the bell button. She could almost touch it by putting out her hands. The swift eyes of the stranger detected the thought that surged up in her brain, and the next moment he stood between her and the summoner like a wall of adamant.

"Come, calm yourself," he said, in tones of mocking politeness." You don't have a caller like me very often, probably have not had such since you came to Paris."

The half-fearsome girl did not speak. In the drawer of the little table which graced the center of the room lay a pearl-mounted revolver about which her fingers had been wound more than once in play. Her mind reverted to it like a flashing spark.

It was the only friend that offered itself to her at that moment.

"I must ask you to go," she said, feeling the old spirit of resistance coming back. "I have not sought this interview, and, besides, you have not identified yourself."

"That is wholly unnecessary, miss," the man grinned. "I shall remain till the so-called Mrs. Vorhees returns."

His sang-froid cut Lemora to the quick. Despite the menace of those impelling eyes, she made a quick leap toward the table, her eager hand drew the drawer toward her, and before the man could interpose a hand the revolver was in her possession. With the glittering weapon in her grasp, Lemora faced the man with the mien of a cornered lioness.

"You see I am not defenseless now!" she exclaimed, triumphantly. "You will go now."

"Just as if you would use that plaything upon me," he answered fearlessly.

"I shall enforce my commands!" retorted Lemora. "For the last time I ask you to quit this room."

He backed one little step, with his gaze centered upon her. What a fascination those strange eyes had. They seemed to penetrate to the depths of the girl's soul. But there was more to those steady, wonderful orbs than mere penetration. Lemora felt her nerves give way beneath that look. She had heard of the arts of the subtle hypnotizer; indeed, she had witnessed his compelling power, and now she felt that she was fast becoming the victim of his devilish arts.

If she could not shake off the spell she would soon pass into the realm of unconsciousness. Thought was losing its throne, she felt as she had never felt before, and she faintly resolved not to fall beneath the man's power. Like the serpent that charms the innocent bird he did not stir.

"I must! I must!" went through Lemora's brain. "This man is a devil incarnate. He came thither bent on evil. He is Edith's bitter foe. He must be conquered, or——"

With the last desperate effort to break

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the spell the environed girl threw up the weapon. Brain and hand trembled. Her finger found the trigger, she pressed it in the last despairing spasm of resistance, and then, toppling across the room, fell at the foot of the sofa with her weapon sinking from a nerveless grasp.

When she came back to consciousness she looked wildly around. The room swam in light. She saw the table and the closed door. Nothing had been disturbed and, thank Heaven, the man was gone!

Gone? No, what was that strange and ghastly thing lying on the carpet almost within reach of her hand. She closed her eyes and averted her face. But it was there; she could not blot out the sight, no matter how she tried. It remained there in all its ghastliness, a human form half doubled up on the rich carpet, with a white face turned to the ceiling.

At length Lemora rose and tottered forward, with her bloodless hands pressed to her palpitating bosom. She moved forward foot by foot, seeing nothing but the thing on the floor. Yes, it was the man who had invaded her privacy. It was the man with the impelling eyes, and even now they seemed to ply the art of the hypnotizer.

The young girl felt her senses leaving her; she recoiled, but the next moment darted toward the electric button. Her finger had found it when the door was thrown open. With a cry Lemora greeted Mrs. Middleton, who was staring at the man on the floor. Edith advanced a step and then, raising her eyes to the speechless girl, cried out: "Why have you done this, child? This man belonged to me!"

The continuation of this remarkable story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year, and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

Jealous of Herself.

(Continued from page five.)

examined her own wardrobe, but not the merest trifle had been disturbed.

After carefully searching her own room, Amabel returned to her cousin's. The miniature safe where Berenice kept her jewels was in its place at the bottom of the closet. Amabel knew the combination and examined the contents. Everything was intact. Nothing had been taken except the rings the missing girl always wore. These Amabel described minutely.

Amabel was keen enough to see that the alert detective suspected her of withholding some important information. She also knew that until Berenice thought proper to come forward—not for one moment did Amabel think that any harm had befallen her cousin—she would be under close surveillance. So to avoid public annoyance she telegraphed her uncle to come to the city, and called up Clement Knowlton for a consultation, and decided to make it as easy as possible for the sleuths by remaining in the house.

As Hawk and the detective left the house, the manager asked his companion whether he thought Amabel knew where her cousin was.

"I don't know," said the man non-committally.

"Do you think that Berenice Marther has met with foul play?" asked Hawk, in affrighted tones.

"I am sure of it," declared the detective, positively. "And in a very few hours I shall lay my hands on the criminal."

This extremely interesting story will be continued in next week's Ledger, presenting the readers with some very strange happenings. If you are not a subscriber to the Ledger, you are strongly urged to send in your subscription at once. Every family should take the Ledger, as humor and stories and pictures make life brighter and pleasanter for all, bringing health and entertainment and doing every one good. Be wise and attend to this today.

The Detective Barrier.

(Continued from page seven.)

burned in the woods. Taking cost of the kind into consideration, there may be six families in town well enough fixed financially to use the make. It's fairly safe to drop five of the six out of consideration, for everything points to the Lettingtons. If their match was used in the woods, what does it mean——"

Right there his powers of surmise failed him, and he abandoned the point for then.

It was to be a morning of letters, for one came by mail shortly after that. It was from a detective whom the district attorney, complying with Barford's wish, had sent to try for tidings of the unknown shack-man and the stumpy-footed woman. The essential part was interesting.

"I feel certain I have news of your wanted pair. A man and a woman passed though Guiddey day before yesterday, and were suspected of designs on a citizen's poultry and eggs, but the citizen scared them off with an old shotgun.

"They were clumsily-built persons, very roughly dressed, ignorant, and, according to the owner of the hens, vicious. The male of the pair had a knife, but as it would not do execution at such a distance as a gun, he and his female companion took to the woods. I have seen the tracks alleged to be left by them, and can say they were roughly shod, while it would be no stretch of the imagination to remark that she was stumpy-footed. Admirable term!

"It is believed they left Grandon at a good round pace, and may be far away now, but, as they were plainly in need of food they had not the money to buy, it is certain they can be traced. They've got to eat.

"Here is more news. Another man is hot-foot after them, and he is Griffen of the same private detective agency Thomson represents. Take it from me that your rival in Grandon is awake to the possibilities of Mrs. Stumpy-foot and comrade. So am I, for report says they look scared and are burning the ground up to get clear. Why this hasty, hunger-besetting flight? Expect further tidings."

Barford was considering this information when he saw two ladies passing on the other side of the way. One was Annabel, and the other—he was not a little surprised to recognize Docia.

She was clearly in a fairly light-hearted mood, and the two were talking together like old friends. Meanwhile, she was looking into Annabel's face with interest not to be expected where acquaintance was so limited and so brief.

The detective had a moment of exultation which was succeeded by depression. Comprehending that Docia had taken a strong fancy to his lady assistant, he would have seen great possibilities in that fact, but another fact stood like a threatening figure.

"I wish," he thought, irritably, "that we had never hired Levi for errands. Once that boy mentions in Docia's hearing that Annabel sent him to me with a note, and she will understand that Annabel is a secret aid of mine. That slip is likely to knock out our schemes at an important juncture."

The young women disappeared further on, and Barford gradually grew more cheerful. Despite her one break, Annabel was shrewd, and something might come of her association with Docia.

At this moment Netley, who had been roving about on his own initiative, rejoined his leader. His expression was stoical, but he had something to say.

"Ever heard of Jasper Logan?" he asked quietly.

"Logan? Why, that's the man who found Kendall's body."

"Exactly! Kendall might have lain where he was all night but for Jasper. That gentleman had been to a farmhouse a mile from the village, and, returning, happened on the body, so he at once informed Constable Carter. I think you have talked with Jasper."

"And in your presence, yes. Why?"

"Report has it that Jasper is to marry red-haired Dorcas Belden."

"Well?"

"He has been paying court to her for a year or two, but his business as buyer and seller of cattle and so on has not been especially paying. Maybe that has deferred the union. According to local authorities the match is certain. Anyhow, this places Jasper as practically one of the Belden family. And he found Kendall dead—or so he says."

"Go right ahead, Netley. You have more, and delay is a sin."

Netley chuckled lightly and resumed. "I got my mind on Logan through hearing folks talk about Thomson's interest in him. Our acute rival early fixed his eagle eye on Jasper, and he has been harassing him a trifle. When the gossips said that in my hearing I got busy, and by asking questions I finally struck oil an acre. Twenty-four hours before Kendall died he and Jasper had had a quarrel."

"About what?"

"I have not been able to learn. Nobody seems to know."

"How serious was it?"

"Even that is hidden from view, for though they were firing words at each other hot as live coals, they hushed up abruptly when somebody drew near them. There it stands, but mark the sequence of facts. Miss Dorcas Belden is red-haired. Jasper is her lover, and, like her, he quarreled with Kendall. Then he was the man who brought news that Kendall was dead."

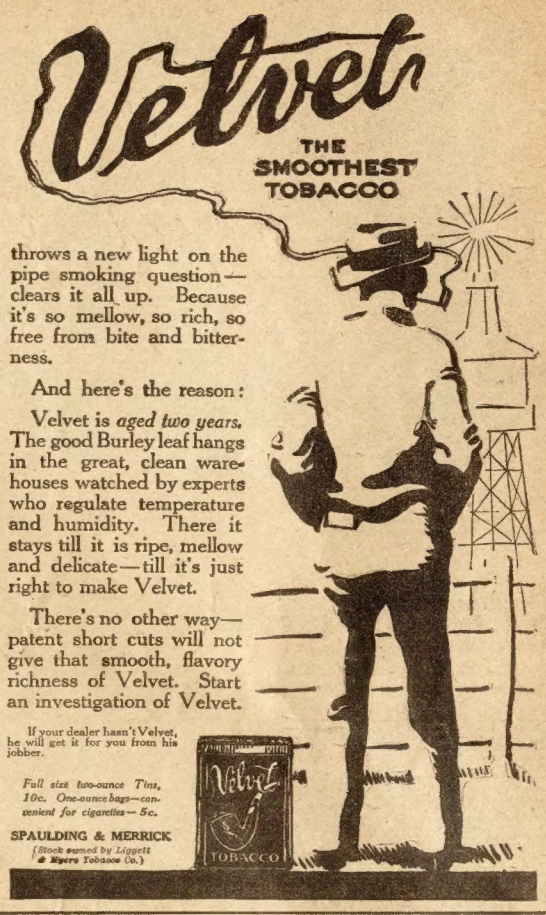
"Interesting, but what more do you know?"

"First, there is a rumor that Jasper is associated with others in the invention of a noiseless gunpowder. Item, no rifle-shot was heard when Kendall was shot."

"Noiseless gunpowder, plus Jasper, sounds good. Well?"

"Lastly, Jasper told the constable that when he chanced upon Kendall's body he was returning from a farmhouse. Thomson has been questioning farmers to learn which house it was, and all deny that Jasper was there. Cornered, Jasper says that he did not mean he stopped at any house, but that he had been out for a walk and passed by Shaw's house on his way home. Here is a busy man who goes for a walk, pre-

(Continued on page fourteen.)



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Geraldine—What did pa say when you asked him for my hand?
Gerald—Never mind what he said, but I wish he could talk without making so many gestures with his feet.

Her Majesty.

"Well, my little man," queried the minister, who was making a call, "do you always do as your mamma tells you?"
"You bet I do," answered the precocious 5-year-old, "and so does papa."

Not Religious.

"I want a nice book for an invalid."
"Something religious, madam?"
"Er—no—he's convalescent."

Filial Consideration.

"Your sons seem very devoted to you."
"Yes," replied Mr. Brigzina, "sometimes I think the boys admire and respect me almost as much as if I were a celebrated baseball player."

Defined.

Ross—What is a critic?
Cory—A man who tells what he doesn't know about what another man can't do.

Weldon—Do you believe dreams go to the contrary?
Howlett—I know it. I dreamed the other night that I was getting a lot of money, woke up suddenly and saw my wife going through my pockets.

Resentful Recollections.

"Did they make you recite 'Little drops of water' when you were a child?"
"Yes," replied Colonel Stillwell. "And it didn't stop there. When I grew up they tried to insist on my adopting them as a beverage."

A Last Chance.

"Going to Wombat's wedding?"
"Not I. I was engaged to that girl Wombat cut me out."
"Well, come to the wedding. You may get a chance to biff him in the jaw with an old shoe."

Nicolo's Guess.

The following story is told by a teacher who was giving language lessons to a class of small boys. She would write a short sentence on the blackboard, and then ask the pupils to define the words. One day she wrote the word "disarrange," and called for a definition of it. The faces of the boys wore a puzzled look, and each glanced at the other, wondering what the meaning might be. Presently a little Italian boy raised his hand.
"Well, Nicolo," said the teacher.
"I donta zackly knowa, buta it has a something to do with a stove."
"Oh, no, you are mistaken," said the teacher. "What makes you think it has anything to do with a stove?"
"Because efery mornin' when my papa he getta up to maka de fire, he say 'Dam-a-dis-a-range.'"

Objected to the Windpipes.

Johnny and his mother were dining with a friend. The first course was chicken soup with macaroni in it. The hostess watched Johnny as he ate quietly gazing into his plate. Finally she asked: "Why don't you eat your soup, Johnny?"
"I don't care for it, please, ma'am."
"But your mamma said you liked chicken soup."
"I do like mamma's chicken soup, but she don't put the windpipes in."—Judge.

Good Air, But—

Citimann—I presume you find the country air very bracing.
Friend (who has just moved to the suburbs)—Too bracing; that's the trouble.
"Hurts your lungs?"
"No; makes us hungry, and we have to come back to the city for something to eat."

Three Illustrations.

"You may give three important illustrations of the power of the press," says the teacher to the class.
The pupil who has not hitherto distinguished himself is first to reply:
"Cider, courtship and politics."—Judge's Library.

Carrying a Mortgage.

Bilkins—Jinson must have built that fine house of his under a mortgage, didn't he?
Wilkins—Yes. How did you know?
Bilkins—I notice his shoulders are beginning to look like a Mansard roof.

Pardonable.

Gentleman—See here! I'm not going to pay any such rates as you charge. Do you think I'm a fool?
Cabman (apologetically)—What else could I think, sir, when you took a cab instead of a street car?

Rural Delights.

Jinks—Boarding in the country, now, eh? What do you do with yourself evenings?
Winks—Some nights I sit outdoors to keep cool, and other nights I go to bed to keep warm.

Taking Sides.

"Which side of this controversy do you take?"
"Wait till it's over," replied Senator Borghum. "It is wiser not to make a selection until you see which side is to remain uppermost."

He Was On.

Mrs. Tawkins—I had a very interesting conversation this afternoon.
Tawkins—Indeed! Who was the listener?

HIS MONEY'S WORTH.

The Musician—But, sir, this passage is marked on the score to be played softly!
The Pork Packer—What of that? At the price that I pay you, you ought to play much louder!

Might Fill the Bill.

Lady—I want a dog that will look terribly fierce, but won't ever bite.
Dealer (meditatively)—I guess you'd better get an iron one, mum.

Fond Mother—I suppose, sonny, you'll be glad when those new front teeth grow in and fill up all that ugly space?
Sonny—I dunno. I can get twice as much pie in my mouth now.

Answered.

Bishop Goodman was one day addressing a Sunday School when he said in a most expressive way: "And now, children, let me tell you a very sad fact. In Africa are 10,000,000 square miles of territory without a single Sunday School where little boys and girls can spend their Sundays. Now, what should we all try and save up our money and do?"
And the class, as one voice, replied in ecstatic union, "Go to Africa!"

His Part.

He—So young March and his father are carrying on the business?
She—Yes. The old man runs the business while young March does the carrying on.

Of Course.

He—Is that you, darling?
She—Yes. Who is this?

Village Gossip—Was there anything unusual at the weddin' last night?
Joey—Well, the groom looked happy, but you know Bill tries to be pleasant no matter what happens.

Important Business.

"Oh, papa," she said, with a blush, "young Mr. Chestnut, who owns so many coal mines in the Midlands, is coming again this evening, and he says he wants to see you on some important business."
"All right, my dear," responded the old man, chuckling her playfully under the chin. "I know what the young man wants."
That evening Mr. Chestnut came to the point at once.
"Mr. Hendricks," he said, boldly, "I want to ask you if you have laid in a stock of coal?"

Advantages of Education.

Successful Farmer (whose son has been at college)—What was that howlin' you was doin' out in th' grove?
Cultured Son—I was merely showing Miss Brighteyes what a college yell is like.
Farmer—Wall, I swan! Colleges is some good after all. I'm goin' into town to sell some truck tomorrow. You kin go along an' do th' callin'.

Mandatory.

Ethel—I'm awfully sorry, but I can't come to the party tonight, as I have a date.
Gladys—Can't you break it?
Ethel—Not this one, dear. It's a mandate.

Couldn't Help Herself.

Clara—How did you come to accept Mr. Saphead?
Dora—I had to. He proposed to me in a canoe, and he got so agitated I was afraid we'd upset.

Got Too Affectionate.

Edith—Why did you dismiss Mr. Goodheart?
Blanch—Oh, he got so he'd rather sit at home and hold my hand than take me to the theater.

Regard for Health.

Mistress—This water has a queer taste.
Careful Servant (who has heard much scientific conversation)—It's all right, mum. There ain't a live germ in it, mum. I run it through the sausage cutter.

Force as an Influence.

"Do you think we will ever have universal peace?"
"Yes, sir," said the philanthropic enthusiast; "and I can whip the man who says we won't."

Modesty.

"I suppose your motto for the national convention is, 'May the best man win.'"
"But," protested the eminent positility, "wouldn't such a declaration on my part sound a little egotistical?"

Would Be Nice.

"These sectional bookcases are fine things. You can start in a small way and add to them as you can afford it."
"Fine idea. Somebody should also invent a sectional hat for women."

Not Too Many Visits.

Mrs. Banks—Why do you have Dr. X. for your physician instead of Dr. Y?
Miss Burke—Economy! Dr. X's wife is so jealous he has to get me cured quickly in order to keep peace in his family.

Her One Lack.

Norah (just landed)—Bridget, must I buy manny clothes whin I git meself a job?
Bridget (old hand)—Indade, no; you'll need nothin' but a goin' away gown.

Mary has a little pug
With such a curly Tail,
That when she wants to keep him safe
She hangs him on a Nail!

A Deep One.

"Gosh all hemlock!" exclaimed the first farmer; "ain't yer struck water yet? How deep hev ye gone?"
"'Bout 100 feet," replied the other placidly.
"An' ain't ye discouraged?"
"Oh! I dunno! I can't say I ain't gittin' a long well."

A Mistake.

"You treat those boys as though they were so many kittens," said the disgusted bachelor uncle to the fond young mother.
"No, she doesn't," snapped the spinster aunt, "it would be better for them if she did, for they would get a good licking every day."

Handsome Lady—Druggist, I don't want this two-cent stamp you just gave me.
The Druggist—Why, madam?
Handsome Lady—Why, George Washington looks real cross on this one.

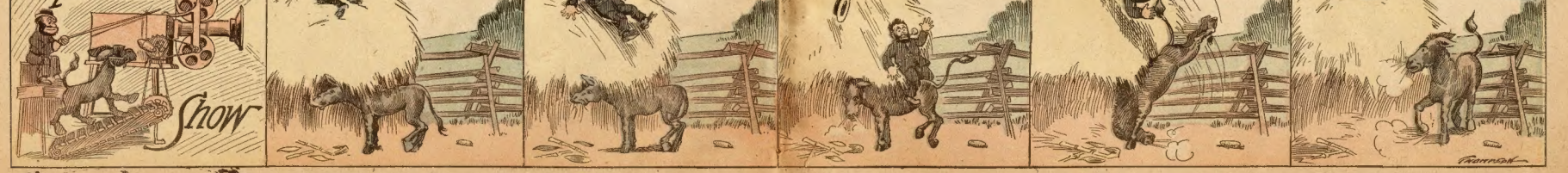
Storm Brewing.

"Run, children, run! Run out into the yard and play."
"What's the matter, mother?"
"Your father has lost his collar button."

Truest Kindness.

Daughter—Papa, Jack is coming up tonight to ask your consent to our marriage. Be kind to him, won't you?"
Father—Very well, daughter. I'll say no.

HE TOOK ANOTHER NAP.



The Hobo—Comin' daylight. Guess I'll slide down—

"And be—

"On my—

"Way! Huh?

"Yep! Just as I thought! It was too early! I'll take another nap!"

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Wouldn't it be nice within a week or so to begin to say goodby forever to the scalding, drubbing, straining, or too frequent passage of urine; the forehead and the back-of-the head aches; the stitches and pains in the back; the growing muscle weakness; spots before the eyes; yellow skin; sluggish bowels; swollen eyelids or ankles; leg cramps; unnatural short breath; sleeplessness and the despondency?

I have a recipe for these troubles that you can depend on, and if you want to make a quick recovery, you ought to write and get a copy of it. Many a doctor would charge you $5.00 just for writing this prescription, but I have it and will be glad to send it to you entirely free. Just drop me a line like this: Dr. A. E. Robinson, K-207, Luck Building, Detroit, Mich., and I will send it by return mail in a plain envelope. As you will see when you get it, this recipe contains only pure, harmless remedies, but it has great healing and pain-conquering power.

It will quickly show its power once you use it, so I think you had better see what it is without delay. I will send you a copy free—you can use it and cure yourself at home.

Schwartz and the Shadow

By Ellis Parker Butler

[Copyright by W. G. Chapman.]

LAST Thursday about five o'clock Balkins Schwartz, who was at one time one of Betzville's most respected leisure-classists, walked up to Uncle Ashdod Clute's back door and asked for five dollars. He said that if he couldn't have that he would willingly accept a square meal, a pair of shoes, a toothpick, or any old hunk of chewing gum that might be sticking on the underside of a chair or table. He finally compromised on a chew of fine cut tobacco. From the story told to Uncle Ashdod we judge that Balkins has been having a hard time of it since he left Betzville and went West. Uncle Ashdod happened to remark that Balkins was so thin he hardly cast a shadow, and Balkins immediately burst into tears. He said he couldn't bear to hear a shadow mentioned after what had happened to him in Colorado.

Balkins said that as soon as he struck Colorado he knew he was in God's country, and he decided he would settle down there if he could find any one that would feed and lodge him free gratis, and give him clothes for nothing, and the first week he was there he found the right widow, and they were married in June, and Balkins settled right down to work at his job, which was pulling a rocking chair into the shadow of the house and dropping off comfortably to sleep between meals. He said he liked the job first rate, except that the sun put there keeps moving all the time, and the shadow of the house would shift around somewhat, and then Balkins had to get up and move his chair into the shadow again. And nothing he could say would make the widow tote his meals out to him—he just had to brace up and walk into the house for them at meal-time, or go without. But he was pretty reasonably happy. He said he would sit there in the shadow and slumber, and when he wearied of that he would sit there and doze, and between times he would get a little change by sitting there and sleeping. And when he wanted excitement he would sit there and lay his head back and snooze.

He was looking at the shadow moodily.

Balkins said he couldn't imagine but one thing that might spoil his happiness, which was that the house might take fire and burn down, and then there would be no shadow of it for him to sleep in, and he said he had awful nightmares right there in the daytime, dreaming he was trying to save the shadow of the house, and the shadow slowly disappearing as the house burned, and then he would awaken and find that the sun had moved around and was shining on him, and he would have to get up and go to all the exertion of moving his rocking chair into the shadow again, but he never imagined how close he was to a worse thing than that. It came suddenly.

Along about August 6th, when the sun was at its hottest, Balkins was sitting there in the shadow of the house when one of those awful Colorado winds came up. Biff! it came, with the suddenness of an explosion, and struck the house full force, and the first thing Balkins knew the house was sailing away through the air. He said that for a minute he could hardly realize it. It was a medium high wind—about ten feet high—and down where he was there was not a ripple of air—not enough to rock his chair—but it caught the house and whooped it away. He says he saw the house settle down about a half a mile away, and his first thought was that he must get up and tote his chair all that distance to get in the shadow again, but the next moment he realized that he was still in the shadow of the house. Yes, sir, he says it was a fact, he was still in the shadow of the house! He said he did not try to account for it at first, but in a minute he figured that the shadow must have been very loosely attached to the house, and that when the wind struck the house it was blowing so high that it did not touch the shadow at all, but just wrenched the house loose from the shadow, and left the low-lying shadow where it was.

At first, Balkins says, he was mighty pleased—mighty pleased—because he did not have to move his rocking chair, but the next moment he began to weep, for he saw that he would have to walk all the way to the house every meal time, and then walk the half-mile to the shadow for his nap, and if it came to that, he might as well be tramping again. He says he put up with it for a week, for the widow's sake, and tramped back and forth between the house and the shadow three times a day, and then he got sick of it. He said he felt that a location half a mile away from a house was no place for a house's shadow, and he was looking at the shadow moodily one day when he noticed that the shadow was curling up a little at the edge, and that gave him an idea. So he got the ox team and hitched it onto the loose edge of the shadow and drove the ox team in the direction of the house. At first the shadow seemed to be following all right, but when he got about halfway to the house he saw he was mistaken; the shadow was not following, it was fastened tight to the house at the edge and it was just stretching out long and thin, like a sheet of rubber. But he goaded the oxen on, and drove up to the house, and nailed the end of the shadow to the side of the house. It wasn't much of a shadow in that shape. It was stretched out half a mile long, and correspondingly narrow, but Balkins said he thought he could make it do, for it was wide enough to set a rocking chair in, anyway.

But that night a terrible thing happened. The widow heard a noise in the chicken coop and got up to see what was the matter, and just as she stepped on the shadow the far end of it came loose and it snapped like a rubber band. Balkins said it snapped up against the house with a noise like a cannon. Naturally a shadow that has been stretched half a mile and then suddenly loosened at the far end would do that. It completely killed the widow; killed her thoroughly, it struck her so hard, and broke the rocking chair, and Balkins says that when he went out and saw that rocking chair all smashed, he didn't have the heart to remain, and he come away.

He told Uncle Ashdod that the only thing he had left of those happy days was a small piece of the shadow he cut off as a memento. It looked to Uncle Ashdod like a small piece of shingle at first, but when Balkins held it up in the sun in the right position Uncle Ashdod saw that it had its shadow with it all right. It did for a fact!

"Ebenezer and the Calf" as a "funny-hap" will make you laugh next week. Go to it.

To Be Sung.

To a group of enthusiasts of the cosmopolitan idea a letter was sent including the suggestion to sing the following national hymn of Siam:

Ova tannas Siam
Ceeva tanna Siam
Ova tannas
Sucha tammas Siam
Inocan giffa tam
Osucha nas Siam
Osucha nas.

To get the best effects this should be executed to the tune of "America" in a closed room with no one present but yourself and the song.

Try it; you'll see things with a roster hue.

Proposals.

"It's about time the novelists were getting this proposal thing right," said the man with the meerschaum pipe, using his thumb for a bookmark. "They ought to give us this love-making game the way it's carried out in real life.

"They get it all wrong in novels. I claim that people don't propose at all! There's none of that heart-palpitating business outside of the Bob Chambers and other brands of fiction. I'm not married myself, but I got interested in the proposal thing some time ago and I made some investigations.

"First of all I spoke to my old friend, Phil Harper. Phil's been married for only about two years and a half—not so long that he wouldn't remember the full particulars.

"'Phil,' says I, 'tell me now—and this is no kid, understand—tell me what you said when you proposed to your wife. Where were you and how did you get around to the subject, and were you scared, and what did your wife—or, rather, your girl—say to you and all that?'

"Phil looked at me and gave a laugh. 'Sorry I can't accommodate you,' he says, 'but, to tell you the truth, I never made a proposal. Oh, no, don't get the idea that my wife proposed. I did n' tever proposing was done, if you call it a proposal. After I'd been calling on Maizie two or three times a week and twice on Sundays for a couple of years I found that the Maizie habit had as much of a hold on me as any drug habit could have, and I didn't know of any quiet little sanitarium where I could be cured of the habit.

"'One evening a couple of girl friends of Maizie's strolled by the front porch and began to guy us. One of them said that she'd be willing to bet we were engaged even at that moment.

"'Why, of course we are,' I says, acting on impulse. 'Aren't we, Maizie?'

"'Maizie gurgled a little 'yes.' That's the way I proposed.'

"Then," went on the man with the meerschaum pipe. "I asked George Crothers about his courtship and proposal.

"'Why,' George told me, 'it was a queer thing about our engagement. It just sort of got to be understood between us that we would be married, sooner or later. One day we were taking a walk and I stopped to look at a new apartment house that was being built.

"'Are we going to live in a flat or in a house?' I asked suddenly, and Carrie—she's my wife now—said she thought we could save money by living in a flat, at least at first. No, there were no flushes of confusion or long drawn sighs or clenches such as you read about in novels. It was pretty commonplace.'

"Oh, I must have asked a dozen friends how they proposed, and I didn't get a single case with any more 'Hearts and Flowers' music to it than these I have cited to you

"Still, I don't suppose there's any use getting excited over the situation. It won't do any good. These novelists will go on dreaming their wild, moving picture dreams. And a lot of 'em call themselves realists!"

Pleaded Guilty.

A young lawyer had been appointed by the Court to defend a man charged with larceny. In his argument to the jury he pleaded for the acquittal of his client. He told of his innocent boyhood days; of the good character of his father, mother and brothers. In short, he launched forth into a family history.

The prisoner, an old darky, had listened with growing uneasiness to his counsel's plea, and as the attorney went on without a hint of stopping, jumping to his feet, he yelled to the Court:

"I'se guilty, yo' honoah, I'se guilty! De jury can't do moah dan send me to jail fo' six months, but if dat fool lawyer doan stop, dey'll hang me, fo' suah."—Judge

To Women Who Dread Motherhood

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No woman need any longer dread the pains of childbirth. Dr. J. H. Dye devoted his life to relieving the sorrows of women. He has proved that the pain at childbirth need no longer be feared by woman and we will gladly tell you how it may be done absolutely free of charge. Send your name and address to Dr. J. H. Dye Medical Institute, 200 Lewis Block, Buffalo, N. Y., and we will send you, postpaid, his wonderful book which tells how to give birth to happy, healthy children, absolutely without fear of pain, also how to become a mother. Do not delay, but write TO-DAY.

Fetters of Guilt.

(Continued from page three.)

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PERFUME OF PINKS.

An hour after entering the inn, Dennis came out, a note book clasped tightly in his hand, his eyes brilliant with excitement. As he stepped from the porch he almost ran into Paul Darrell.

"What's up?" asked Paul. "You look as if you had found a fortune and seen a ghost all at the same time!"

"By George! you hit the nail on the head!" cried Quigley. "You are just the fellow I want to see! Come, old boy, I want to use you."

"Use me? How?" questioned Darrell, surprised and perplexed.

"I want you to send this over the wire," Quigley replied, tapping his book with his finger. "I have got one of the biggest 'beats' my paper ever printed. It's great! I want you to come and send it for me."

"But I'm taking a vacation," pleaded Darrell, "and there's another fellow down at the office."

"Then you can let him take a little time off. You must go. I want you to hear the story, and I haven't time to tell you unless you go."

"In that case I'll be glad," replied Darrell. "What is it—something new regarding the Dent case?"

"It's the whole thing!" cried Quigley, "from beginning to end, and not a soul will have a chance to get the story till my paper has printed it."

"Good Lord! Where did you get the story?"

"I'll explain as we walk to the station. We must hurry and get it on the wire for the evening edition."

"All right," replied Darrell, as the two started at a brisk walk down the long dusty road toward the station. "I congratulate you, my boy! But who gave you the story?"

"Mortimer Dent, himself!" replied Quigley.

"Mortimer Dent!" gasped Darrell. "Good God! What are you driving at?"

"The truth. Mortimer Dent is not dead at all."

"Not dead?"

"No. Let me explain. The whole scheme was concocted by Mortimer Dent himself to obtain the twenty thousand dollars insurance on his life. It all came to him, it seems, while he was camped on Willow Creek. A cousin of his, Sam Potter, arrived at the camp, having come from the Far West to see Dent on a business matter. While in camp Potter died suddenly of heart disease. The likeness between the two was remarkable. Their own friends could not tell one from the other when both were clean shaven. But usually Potter wore a beard, and with a beard, his resemblance to his cousin could not be noticed readily. At the time of his death he was clean-shaven, and Dent hit on the idea of palming off the body of his dead cousin for his own.

"Dent made known his plan to Miss Simmons, who is his niece, and she was horrified and sought to deter him from his purpose. He took the body to Mapleton in his baggage. Miss Simmons followed him in disguise, using one of Mr. Huddleson's old suits and his hat. She saw Dent in his room and told him if he undertook to perpetrate the fraud she would expose him. He promised to give the scheme up and leave the inn with the body that night, and in order to assist him, it was Miss Simmons who went to Nick Bateman, the farmer, and hired him to call at the inn for Mortimer Dent and his baggage. She then returned home, and supposed that Dent and done as agreed till I mentioned in her presence something about the murder at the Black Bear. Dent who had brought a live rabbit in his baggage, killed it and used the blood to smear over the wound he had made in the dead man's breast to give the appearance of violence having been used, and the story of the negro whom he said was following him, was invented to furnish a motive for the supposed murder. After the deed was done he went to the Sky Springs House, just as Potter had intended to do, and it was his design to pass himself off as Potter if he were discovered, but Mr. Huddleson, who found that suspicion was directed toward him and his ward, went to Dent and compelled him to make a confession. That is the story in brief."

Darrell gave a prolonged whistle. "By George! Who could ever have guessed it?" he cried. "And so Miss Simmons in Dent's niece?"

"Yes, and he wanted her to become his accomplice and collect the insurance, but when she was so aghast at his dreadful proposition, he decided to collect it himself under the name of his cousin, and to pass himself off as Sam Potter during the remainder of his life. It was a flimsy arrangement, but it might have been successful for all that had it not been for the intervention of Huddleson and his ward."

"And what is to become of Mortimer Dent?"

"He has been taken to jail where he will have to stand trial for the attempted fraud. It is uncertain what the outcome will be, for it transpires that Dent was at one time an inmate of an asylum for the insane, and it is not unlikely that he is at the present time mentally unbalanced."

"Sure thing," nodded Darrell. "A man of sound mind could hardly have attempted to carry out a fraud of such grewsome and appalling character. But here we are at the station, and we must get to work."

* * * * *

On his return from the station, Quigley met Thomas Sears, who had just got back from his trip to the Sky Springs.

"There wasn't a soul about the place," Sears said. "If Potter has been there at all, he is surely not there now."

"No, he is not there," said Quigley. "Mr. Sears, I have just learned the whole truth about this dreadful business. Samuel Potter is dead, I am sorry to inform you. It was his body and not that of Mortimer Dent that was found in Dent's room at the inn. Dent is alive, and I have just taken down his confession."

"Great heavens!" cried Sears aghast. "Can this be possible?"

"It is," replied, Quigley, and he told the story just as he had heard it from the lips of Mortimer Dent.

"It is a strange and dreadful piece of business," declared Sears. "I must go and have a talk with Dent. He must have been mad. Good heavens! What could he have been thinking about!"

"No doubt he is mad," Quigley remarked, "for it appears that he was once adjudged insane."

"Indeed! Then that may account for his queer acts."

That evening at eight a telegram was brought for Quigley. It was from the managing editor:

"Great scoop! Great story! Bully Boy! You've earned a generous vacation. BARCLAY."

And Dennis Quigley spent the vacation in Mapleton.

* * * * *

The slender figure of a girl with a dark, witching face, moved amid the profusion of flowers in the old-fashioned garden, drinking in the perfumed air that stirred the beds brilliant with pinks and marigolds. At the girl's side stood a young man, his face radiant, the subtle perfume of the flowers ravishing his senses

"Miss Simmons," he was saying, "tomorrow I must return to the city, but before I go, you must give me a promise."

She stood with face half averted, her gaze fixed on a flower she held in her hand.

"Why, what promise could you want me to give!" she asked, turning a questioning glance on him for an instant.

"Surely you ought to know."

"How absurd!" she remarked. "How should I know what you would ask. I am not a mind reader."

A faint smile lingered about the dainty mouth and in the dark eyes there was an incandescent light.

"I have been here almost every day for the past week," went on Quigley, "and you know that I love you—a thousand times more than I can express."

"And you have known me less than ten days!" she replied, with a sudden lifting of her eyes to his. "Surely, Mr. Quigley, you cannot expect one to take such declarations seriously."

"But you must and shall!" he declared, taking her hand. "I am serious. Good God, Miss Simmons—Bertha—if you could only understand how much in earnest I am you would not say that!" He

WELL POSTED

A California Doctor With 40 Years Experience.

"In my 40 years' experience as a teacher and practitioner along hygienic lines," says a Los Angeles physician, "I have never found a food to compare with Grape-Nuts for the benefit of the general health of all classes of people.

"I have recommended Grape-Nuts for a number of years to patients with the greatest success and every year's experience makes me more enthusiastic regarding its use.

"I make it a rule to always recommend Grape-Nuts, and Postum in place of coffee, when giving my patients instructions as to diet for I know both Grape-Nuts and Postum can be digested by anyone.

"As for myself, when engaged in much mental work my diet twice a day consists of Grape-Nuts and rich cream. I find it just the thing to build up gray matter and keep the brain in good working order.

"In addition to its wonderful effects as a brain and nerve food Grape-Nuts always keeps the digestive organs in perfect, healthy tone. I carry it with me when I travel, otherwise I am almost certain to have trouble with my stomach." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Strong endorsements like the above from physicians all over the country have stamped Grape-Nuts the most scientific food in the world. "There's a reason."

Look in pkgs. for the famous little book, "The Road to Wellville."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

SPEAR Will Trust You Wherever You Live—Write For His Free Catalog

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The rich and prosperous class can always command the luxuries of life, but the average home lover needs the Spear System of Credit to the Nation. I want 1,000,000 families to say of me:—He helped us to furnish and beautify our homes." I ask for no higher tribute to my life's work. Write for my Free Catalog.

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No matter in what part of the United States you live, you can buy everything for the home from us on credit and on easy payments to suit your convenience. Just mail us your name and address for one of our Mammoth Homefurnishing Catalogs, containing illustrations from photographs and full descriptions of thousands of articles in

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We offer you a vastly larger and better stock than even the big city stores—all sold by us on long time, open account, easy credit terms and you can make your selections *right at home with your family at your elbow.*

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Your credit is good with us. Why not use it? It is extended to honest people, *everywhere*, regardless of their income. Under our liberal open account, easy payment plan you can have every home comfort and convenience in buying possessed by the most favored shopper in the city stores.

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You need not deny yourself anything on account of the lack of ready cash. Select what you want from our Catalog, make a small cash payment and pay a little each month.

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While our credit terms are the most liberal in the country, yet our prices are the lowest. This is because we buy goods in such vast quantities that we secure rock bottom prices and with our immense volume of sales we can afford to accept just one small added profit from each sale. We allow no one to undersell us. Just get our prices!

Take A Month To Decide

Anything you order from our Bargain Catalog or select from this advertisement, will be shipped *on approval.* Keep the goods 30 days. If not fully satisfied to buy, send the goods back at our expense and we will refund all the money you have paid us.

"Steinway Special" Sewing Machine

Made with beautifully finished solid oak case—dust proof head case, heavy ball-bearing iron stand, and fitted with high arm automatic lift head. Full set attachments and accessories. Up-to-date and just like this illustration.

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In sending for our catalog you will find it convenient to fill out the coupon in lower left hand corner of this advertisement with your name and address. Enclose it in an envelope and mail it to us, or a postal will do.

SPEAR & CO.,
Dept. 64
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Please send me, free, without obligation of any kind on my part, a copy of your Mammoth Bargain Catalog.

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ADDRESS.....

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Colonial Library Table

Large, heavy, 22x42 inches, made of American quartered oak, fitted with drawer. Splendid Colonial design, highly glossed finish—guaranteed to give satisfaction.

No. C. W. 3774—Price $8.95.

"Iceland" Refrigerators

are all made of hard wood, with finest piano finish. White enamel lined, and fitted with patent sanitary traps. Guaranteed to be most economical as ice savers, and to give best possible satisfaction. Mineral wool lined and finest nickel trimmings. Prices from *$9.60* up, on easy credit terms, *30 Days' Free Trial.*

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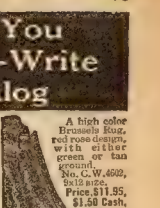
Dept. 64 Pittsburgh, Pa.



A high color Brussels Rug, red rose design, with either green or tan ground. No. C.W. 4602, 9x12 size. Price $11.95, $1.50 Cash, 75c per Month.

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Full size frame, best steel, nicely finished. Leatherette covering, dark green. 10 in. wheels, heavy rubber tires. When folded runs on two wheels

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Guaranteed 10 Years. Price $18.45

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See our Catalog for Sizes and Prices of Refrigerators.

Don't Kill Your Baby with Drugs

Quit trying to cure the little one by dosing it with nauseating drugs—disguised poisons. Cease your well-meaning but deadly dangerous use of nasty drugs which often masquerade as "soothing syrups" and other child remedies.

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Get Our FREE Book of Secrets of the Drug System

This book will give the real facts about "commercialized medicine"—it will show how the sick are forced to gulp down vile nostrums of deadly poison—it will disclose the whole inner workings of the "dope system." Your ignorance of these facts jeopardizes the life and happiness of yourself and all those near and dear to you. Get our book and inform yourself. You will get the most startling information printed for years—information on conditions that *threaten the lives of you and yours.* We want you to read it. Just say "send your free book." Write us at once. You may need it tomorrow.

THE OXYPATHOR COMPANY, 209 Pearl Street, BUFFALO, N. Y.

A Guaranteed Self-Filling Fountain Pen FREE!

THE GREATEST OFFER BY THE GREATEST NEWSPAPER

You should not be without it. Strong, durable, and will last a lifetime. Can fill with ordinary ink, no need to have a special kind of fountain pen ink or a filler (which you will probably break or lose) and no more inky fingers. All you have to do to fill the pen is to dip the pen point in the ink and turn the scored ring on the end to the right until it stops. When it stops the pen is filled. All very simple, at the same time it works perfectly. Full directions with each pen. Made of best hard, black rubber with a high-grade pen point, made by one of the best fountain pen factories of Germany. They are guaranteed to write perfectly.

Fill out the Coupon below, enclose it with $1.00 and send it to us at once.

OUR GUARANTEE: If any of these fountain pens are defective in any way in make, or will not write through fault of manufacturers, they can be returned and we will replace it by another.

How to get this Pen Free

These self-filling fountain pens will make friends for us and we want every reader of The Chicago Ledger to have one free. To every one who will send us $1.00 for a year's subscription to The Chicago Ledger, we will send one of these splendid self-filling fountain pens absolutely free, all charges prepaid.

We will treat old and new subscribers alike on this splendid offer. If you are now a subscriber and wish this pen fill out the coupon, state on bottom that this is a renewal subscription, enclose $1.00 with the coupon and send it to us and we will send you the pen absolutely free and extend your subscription one year from the time it is now paid up to.

W. D. BOYCE COMPANY,
Chicago,

Gentlemen—Enclosed find $1.00 for one year's subscription to The Chicago Ledger. This Coupon entitles me to the self-filling pen advertised above.

FREE COUPON:

NAME .....

Street or R.F.D. .....

Box No. ..... Town .....

State ..... Get a Guaranteed Fountain Pen Free.

This is a ..... subscription. New or Renewal

CANADA SUBSCRIPTION PRICE $1.50 PER YEAR.

Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

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Back numbers of the Ledger can be had by addressing this office. Always give the numbers desired, plainly written, accompanied by your full address, and your order will receive prompt attention. Price 5 cents per copy.

BEWARE OF STRANGERS.

The Ledger employs no traveling agents to solicit subscriptions, and every person working in that capacity is a fraud. No person is authorized to take subscriptions for the Ledger unless he or she be well known in the city or village where they have been appointed agents to sell this paper every week. A liberal reward will be paid for evidence that will enable us to arrest and convict such persons as are now traveling from town to town in different sections of this country, claiming to be agents of the Ledger and thereby defrauding the people. Beware of strangers

ADVERTISING.

Advertising rate $2.25 per Agate Line, per insertion for advertisements in the The Chicago Ledger and The Saturday Blade combined. These two weeklies have an average circulation of

1,000,000

COPIES WEEKLY.

Fair, but false—a blond wig.

Getting even is an expensive luxury.

Many an innocent picture is framed in gilt.

It takes a lot to live—usually a house and lot.

A sermon is either based on a text or a pretext.

But a slow going man is seldom overtaken by opportunity.

It takes a financial artist to draw a satisfactory check.

Dead men tell no tales—but the obituary manufacturers do.

It is more or less difficult for a truthful person to be popular.

A political dark horse is a nightmare to the others in the race.

Sometimes an officeholder has more of a pull than a dentist.

A kitten is mild and innocent, but it always grows up to be a cat.

The harder a woman is to please the less a sensible man will try.

One good thing about poverty is the taxes you don't have to dodge.

Perhaps a rolling stone gathers no moss because it isn't on the level.

Some men who boss their wives in public are as meek as lambs at home.

Even the watch a man keeps on his tongue will run down occasionally.

An expert is a man who can get his own price for guessing at things.

If a mother says her boy is "sensitive" it's a safe bet that he is spoiled.

You can always get a lot for your money by patronizing a real estate dealer.

Don't attempt to light your path through life by burning the candle at both ends.

Some people go through life waiting for a chance to get even with somebody else.

It doesn't console a woman to tell her that wrinkles are the dimples of second childhood.

When it comes to getting something for nothing, his Satanic majesty is at the top of the heap.

A man would rather be seen walking along the street with a policeman than between two women.

No man can be a cynic until he has associated with a woman who is the real thing in that line.

drew her to him; and though she tried to release herself he would not let her go. "I want you to marry me," he went on. "You need not pretend that you do not know that I love you, that I have loved you from the first moment I saw you."

"Mr. Quigley, how dare you!" she cried. "Release me this moment, I command you!"

Her cheeks were aflame, her eyes vivid with the fires of resentment.

He still held her hands, looking straight into her eyes.

"One moment," he said, in a husky voice, "you must—you shall tell me—one thing or the other—that you love me and will marry me—or that you do not love me and never can love me. Speak," he cried, "you can and must tell me one or the other."

She struggled to draw her hands away, a swift coloring suffusing her cheeks.

"I shall not answer you," she breathed; "you shall not compel me to."

He released her hands and stood looking into her eyes.

"So you do not love me?" he said, "and never can? Is that it?"

For some moments neither of them spoke. The fragrant perfume of the pinks came to Quigley, and he knew that he could never in all his life forget that haunting scent, but whether it should linger in his memory to fill it with regret or the sweetest pleasure of his life, depended on the answer he should receive.

"Will you not answer me?" he asked.

Still she said nothing.

"If you do not love me, I shall return to the city tonight," he said. "Shall I go or stay?"

She half turned from him.

"What a tyrant you are!" she said, a misty light in her eyes. "I—don't want you to go——"

A great joy leaped into Dennis Quigley's breast. He folded her in his arms and pressed burning kisses on her lips. And all at once the sun seemed to shine more bright, the songs of the birds were more sweet, and the breath of the pinks was as the perfume from Love's unseen censer.

The End.

The Detective Barrier.

(Continued from page nine.)

sumably to have exercise, and yet he had said, at supper time, that he was dead tired. Fagged out, he needed a long walk. Is that sense?"

Barford drank in the information without a change of expression. Netley seemed surprised at his indifference, and yet not exactly disappointed

"Is this your carpenter work?" Barford asked.

"Hardly! Thomson started the ball rolling, and now the village folks have suddenly got Jasper on the brain. That walk does seem pretty thin. He quarreled with Kendall, and Dorcas was his ladylove. Likewise, Dorcas has red hair."

Barford turned the items over carefully. Previously, he had passed Jasper by lightly. An ordinary man to see and listen to, he looked peaceable enough to pass in a crowd. The problem was, just how much color was added by the facts now received. What about Jasper?

This extremely interesting story will be continued in next week's Ledger, presenting the readers with some very strange happenings. If you are not a subscriber to the Ledger, you are strongly urged to send in your subscription at once.

Heine—Und how dit you say you became such a wonderful orator?

Louey—Mein poy, I began by addressing envelopes.

Juvenile Discouragement.

Elsie—Mamma, there is a funny old man in this Pickwick book that's always telling his son to beware of the widows. Why is that?

Mamma—Well, a widow is supposed to be skillful in catching a husband.

Elsie—Gracious! I wonder if I'll have to be a widow before I can get married.

WANT ADS

Want and Classified Advertising not less than 14 words accepted for insertion in the Ledger and Blade at 25 cents per word.

AUTOMOBILES FOR SALE

BEST sparker made. Glass shows mixture. Americo, B., Stamford, Conn.

AGENTS WANTED

$25 Weekly taking orders for cutrate grocories. Outfit free. Progressive Table Supply Co., Toledo, Ohio.

AGENTS, 3 days wages for 15 minutes work. Send for free sample machine. Apply at once, territory still open. Pullman Vacuum Cleaner, 7 05 Ashland avenue, Chicago.

AGENTS on salary or commission. The greatest agent's seller ever produced; every user of pen and ink buys it on sight; 200 to 500 per cent profit; one agent's sales amounted to $820 in six days; another $72 in two hours. Monroe Mfg., Co. X, 66 La Crosse, Wis.

FIVE dollars per hundred for collecting names and addresses. All or spare time, stamp for particulars. Pen Sales Co., Darby, Penna.

DRY Goods Remnants—Greatest Bargains on Earth. Agents and storekeepers' proposition. Remnant Store, Cincinnati.

OWN a Moore's Non-leakable Fountain Pen. Send stamp for catalog. A. C. Janney & Co., Bassett, Neb.

AGENTS write for unparalleled special offer, six pair Triplewear Hose Free. Big money selling Triplewear Hosiery; beautiful line; guaranteed six months. Triplewear Mills, Dept. K, 133d & Sanderson Place, New York.

PORTRAITS—Photo pillow tops, photo china plates, frames, sheet pictures, etc., at prices below the lowest and guaranteed. Rejects credited. Prompt shipments; 30 days' credit, catalogue and samples free. Jas. C. Bailey Co., H, 7, Chicago.

AGENTS make $30.00 weekly selling our 500 Handy Household Articles; catalogue free Reset Co., 1126 Wells St., Chicago.

STARK BRO'S, Louisiana, Mo., Big Ideas in tree selling. Best terms known to nursery world. Box 80.

LIVE Agents—Sell household labor-savers. Astounding demand. Handsome catalogue and sample repeater, ten cents. Home Patented Specialty House, Carmen, Okla.

WANTED Agents to sell rich looking imported $6x65 rugs. $1 each. R. H. Carter, Milan, Tenn., sold 115 in four days. His profit $51. You can do as well. Write for sample offer and unique selling plan. Exclusive territory. Condon, Importer, Stonington, Maine

TURN Your Spare Time Into Money.—You can easily make $10 a week by acting as our representative. Write today. R. M. Place, Dept. 13, 239 N. Cap. St., Washington, D. C.

SCHOOLS

WOULD You Study at Your Home to prepare to earn from $800 to $1,200 per year? Answer quick. Normal, Academic, Business, Real Estate, Law, Adv., Auto, Engineering, Civil Service courses taught by mail. Send 25c for "New Education." Booklets free. For "Scholarship" apply K, 20, Carnegie College, Rogers, Ohio.

HELP WANTED

GOVERNMENT Post Office Examinations everywhere soon. Get prepared by former U. S. Civil Service Examiner. Write for Booklet B. Patterson Civil Service School, Rochester, N. Y.

WANTED—Men and Women; for Government Positions. $80.00 month. Annual vacations. Short hours. No "layoffs." Common education sufficient. Over 12,000 appointments coming. Influence unnecessary. Farmers eligible. Send postal immediately for free list of positions open. Franklin Institute, Dep't C 31, Rochester, N. Y.

WANTED—Active man in each locality. To join this Society. And introduce our Memberships. Sick, accident, death benefits. All or spare time. Make $50 to $500 a month. Write. Box N L-293, Covington, Ky.

WANTED, Post Office Clerks, City and Rural Carriers. Thousands needed. Examinations soon. Trial Examination Free. Write Today. Ozment, K, St. Louis.

RAILWAY Mail Clerks, Carriers, Wanted. Good Pay, Fine Positions, Pay for Instruction after you receive position. Liberty Institute, Dept. 41, Rochester, N. Y.

LEARN to Make Mirrors; make big money. Particulars for stamp. MacDonald, 124, Peru, Ind.

A BIT Shy on Salary? I pick up $1,500 yearly additional from newspaper correspondence. My book tells what's news, how to get it, where to sell. Newspaper directory included. No correspondence school expense; only 50 cents. First sale returns investment. Morris White, 1671 Dacelda, Detroit, Mich.

WANTED—Untrained young men for Secret Service. Great work and best pay on earth. Send 10c for plans. Address, Secret Service, Martinsville, Virginia.

WANTED—Agents to sell Printers, Engineers, Motormen—anybody who wants clean hands—Vanco, the perfect hand soap and household cleanser. Let anybody try a sample and you make a quick sale. Add twelve dollars per week easily to your income. We want hustling representative in every shop. Enclose ten cents for full-size can and particulars. Address Box 112, The J. T. Robertson Company, Manchester, Conn.

SOUND men, 20 to 40 years old, wanted at once in every city for Electric Railway Motormen and Conductors. $60 to $100 month; no experience necessary; fine opportunity; no strike; write immediately for application blank. Address Mgr. Z., 20 Dwight Building, Kansas City, Missouri

FEMALE HELP WANTED

LADIES can make shields at home; $10 per 100; work sent prepaid to reliable women. Particulars for stamped addressed envelope. Eureka Co., Dept. 17, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

J. P.

Those suffering from weakness and lack of vigor should take JUVEN PILLS. One box will tell a story of marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1. Made by its originators, C. L. Hood Co., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, LOWELL, MASS. (Z)

Every youthful graduate expects to set the world on fire—but it doesn't seem to worry the insurance people very much.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

MAKE a comfortable living at home sewing plain seams. Any ordinary sewing machine. All home work. No canvassing. Steady. Sewers wanted in each town. No triflers reply. State how much time can sew. Send ten cents for postage samples, etc. Returned if not satisfactory. Home Sewers Company, New York Jobbers Sewing. 'BL' Dept. Rehoboth, Delaware.

FOR WOMEN

OUR Machine Washes a tub of clothes in six minutes. $2.50 prepaid. Free booklet. Basket Washing Machine, 415 Wood, Fremont, Ohio.

TYPEWRITERS

TYPEWRITERS—All makes $10 up. Free trial. Guaranteed two years. Express prepaid. Francis Factory Company, Rosedale Station, Kansas City, Kansas.

SONGWRITERS

SONGWRITERS:—Write at once for our exceptional and liberal free song publishing offer. Keith's Music Company, Long Branch, N. J.

FARMS FOR SALE

FRUIT LANDS—Beautiful Kootenay Valley, B. C., 88 acres, subdivided into 2 4-acre tracts, 11 of 5-acres and one of 25 acres. The 25-acre tract is improved, has dwelling, stable, ice-house, etc. All for a limited time at the low price of $6,000. Adjoining land held at $200 per acre. Will cost you nothing to write and investigate. Owner forced to realize thereon. ¼ cash, balance easy terms. Only six hours from Spokane. Fine fruit. Pure water, ideal climate and very low taxes. Address D. B. Dulmage, Morgan Park, Illinois.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.

LEARN to Collect Money. By a sure simple system. Send for free book "Skilful Collecting." National Collectors Ass'n, Boyce street, Newark, Ohio.

PRINTING

LOOK Here—100 letterheads, 100 envelopes, 100 return envelopes or business cards, printed for $1, postpaid. Walden Press, Roxbury, Mass.

PATENTS

PATENTS That Protect—Patent your ideas; they may bring you wealth; 64 page book free. Fitz Gerald & Co., Dept. W, Washington, D. C.

POSTCARDS

ADVANCE Socially—Our Mail Way tells us how to exchange good motto and message cards (that really mean something worth while") among either ladies or gentlemen everywhere. It's big, world-wide, strong and reliable. Registers new members now for a year for 25c. We start you right. Fascinating, absorbing, profitable, results assured. All fun lovers and optimists send to Advanced Correspondence Exchange, B 714 Pittsburg, Pa.

JUST Girls—20 Post Cards of Girls, 25c, postpaid; no landscapes. O. K. Pub. Co., Decatur, Ill

POST Cards—Join The Century Post Card Club, Marshall, Michigan, to get post card exchanges from all parts of America. Trial 10c. Annual $1.

MISCELLANEOUS

BARGAIN—Three fine necktie $1. Gold, plated Pin Free. Satin and silk retail at $2.50. This offer is for short time only. Send $1 at once. Money refunded by return mail if not satisfied. State colors desired. W. C. Watkins, Parnassus, Pa.

3 BEAUTY Poses 25c. Decorate your "den" with "art gems." Exquisite portrayals of female loveliness. 3 bewitching poses 25c; 8 for 50c. One 5½x8½ photograph free with every order for six. Our Dollar Special: Two 6½x8½ photographs, 6 cabinet size and 32 small photographs, all for $1. Our pictures are all real photographs. No reproductions of paintings or other cheap trash. Money back if not pleased. B. J. King Company, Andovor, Ohio.

MEDICAL

FREE Sample Box Morgan's Catarrh Balm, sufficient for week's treatment, postpaid for 2c stamp. Never fails. No cocaine. Try it. Morgan Medicine Co., Des Moines, Iowa.

PERSONAL

MARRIAGE Paper: Highest Character; Incorporated; 16th year; 8,000 members; paper sealed; send 10c. B. W. Love, Box 1600, Denver, Colo.

FREE Life Reading; send birthdate and dime postage to Dr. Smith, Dept. 36, Saginaw, Michigan.

SIXTH and Seventh Books of Moses, Long Lost Friend, Black Arts. Many other rare books. Very interesting book sent sealed free for 2c postage. Star Novelty Co., E. Camden, New Jersey.

FREE Reading by trance medium. Send date of birth—dime. Dr. Eagle, Saginaw, Michigan.

MARRY, thousands wealthy, anxious for early marriage, descriptions free. Confidential, 268 Market, San Francisco, Calif.

MARRY—Best plan on earth, sent free photo of every lady member. The Pilot, Dept. 74, Marshall, Mich.

LOVING never fails. Every package guaranteed. Either sex 10c. Two packages sealed 20c. Union, Box 100N, Palatine, Illinois

MARRY Rich—Matrimonial paper of highest character, containing hundreds of photos and descriptions of marriageable people with means; mailed free, sealed; either sex. Write, one may be your ideal. Standard Cor. Club, Box 607, Grays Lake, Illinois

MARRY—Photos, descriptions and P. O. addresses of pretty, rich ladies and gents, want to marry, free. H. Lane, St. Paul, Minn.

MARRIAGE paper free; best published for sure results; reliable. Eastern Agency 55, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

NEW book "Kate," 10c. Catalog books and fiden pictures free. Atoz Co., A-1, West Jefferson, Ohio.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 461, Bistreville, Pa.

ANECDOTES OF PEOPLE

All in Day's Work.

The hour was 2 a. m. "Ah!" groaned the journalist, "here's the office again calling up for a point of information that they might just as well look up in the dictionary."

"So sorry to disturb you," came a feminine voice which he recognized as that of a lady across the street. "It's shocking to call now, I know. But I can't get the doctor nor anybody. The baby is crying, and I thought you might be able to tell me what to do."

"Colic," grunted the writer.

"No, it isn't a colicky cry."

"Maybe he's too warm—is he perspiring?"

"No."

"Have you hunted for pins?"

"Yes, and his clothes are perfectly comfortable."

"When did you feed him last?"

"At 6, when I put him to bed."

"Maybe he's hungry."

"Oh, do you think that's what ails him?" And the lady rang off.

At 3 a. m. the telephone rang again. "I just wanted to thank you and tell you that you were right. The baby was hungry."

Not Such a Stupid Scot.

The Scotchman could not find his ticket. On the conductor's second round it was still missing.

"What's that in your mouth?" he asked.

Sure enough, there was the missing ticket.

The conductor punched it and went on his way.

"Ah, weel," said Sandy, in reply to his fellow passenger's banter, "I'm nae sae absent-minded as ye would think. You was a very old ticket, and I just bit off the date."

It Was Tough!

A resident in a small suburban town had a visit from a German friend, who knew very little English, but played the violin well. One of this resident's neighbors gave a "musical evening," and, of course, he and his visitor were invited. The German took his violin, and, when his turn came he played one of his best pieces, from one of the great masters.

When he had finished there was an awkward silence and no applause. The people were still looking expectantly at the German, who looked disappointed and flustered. The silence grew painful.

Finally the hostess, quite red in the face, edged over to the side of the German's friend.

"Can't you get him to?" she whispered.

"What do you mean?"

"Why, now that he's got tuned up, isn't he going to play something?"

Puzzled a Little Boy.

The smart little city boy loved to put conundrums to Uncle Josh and see the old negro's struggles to understand, but one day he received a bona fide answer which is still perplexing him.

"Have you got any brothers, Uncle Josh?" the S. L. B. inquired.

"No, honey," replied the negro. "I ain't got nary brother, but all my sisters has."

Camaraderie.

Mayor Goetz of South Bend was discussing the sudden political camaraderie of two erstwhile hostile camps.

"There is something weird about it," he said, "something ghastly and unreal. In fact, it reminds me of the insane asylum inmates.

"What brings you here?' an old inmate asked of a newcomer one morning at breakfast.

"'Fits,' was the reply. 'I take fits.'

"'Why, so do I!' cried the other lunatic delightedly. 'Come on out and we'll have one together!'

"And in strange, weird camaraderie the two men hurried forth into the garden."

The Train of Coincidence.

"Call up Mr. Train, 0123 Central." The secretary nodded, took off the receiver, asked for the number, and at length heard a voice at the other end.

"Mr. Train?" he called.

"Is that so? Too bad!" came the answer.

"Is this 0123 Central?" he inquired, puzzled.

"It is."

"Mr. Train?" repeated the secretary.

"Well, take the next one."

"What do you mean?" cried the secretary impatiently. "Who is this?"

"This is Lime Street Station," came the reply. "We have lots of trains!"

Then he looked into the 'phone book and rang up 9123 Royal.

A Puzzler.

The proprietor of a tanyard was anxious to fix a suitable sign to his premises. Finally a happy thought struck him. He bored a hole through the door post and stuck a calf's tail into it, with the tufted end outside.

After a while he saw a solemn-faced man standing near the door looking at the sign. The tanner watched him a minute and then stepped out and addressed him.

"Good morning, sir," he said.

"Good morning," said the other, without taking his eyes off the sign.

"Do you want to buy leather?" asked the tanner.

"No."

"Perhaps you've got some hides to sell."

"No."

"Are you a farmer?"

"No."

"What are you then?"

"I am a philosopher. I've been standing here for nearly an hour trying to find out how that calf got through that hole."

A Timely Escape.

A German shoemaker left the gas turned on in his shop one night, and, upon arriving in the morning struck a match to light it. There was a terrific explosion, and the shoemaker was blown out through the door almost to the middle of the street.

A passer-by rushed to his assistance, and, after helping him to rise, inquired if he was injured.

The little German gazed in at his place of business, which was now burning quite briskly, and said:

"No, I ain't hurt. But I got out shust in time, eh?"

A Whopper.

The late Bishop William N. McVickar of Rhode Island harbored a large soul in a body to match. He was a bachelor, whose sister kept house for him.

On one occasion he overheard her instruct that the wished to have a pair of trousers pressed, and the latter sent a boy to his residence to get them.

The bishop's sister admitted the messenger and called upstairs: "Willie, the boy has come for your trousers."

When her brother appeared the youth's astonished gaze traversed the prelate's impressive "corporosity," then he murmured:

"Gee! Is that Willie?"

Painting Her Interior.

The fluid did the Portsmouth woman little or no good. On the contrary, it seemed to debilitate and depress her. She then wrote the Boston man a long letter in which she described to him the apparently evil results of the medicine. Promptly she received the following telegram from Boston:

"The only medicine I sent was screen blacking. If you are taking that, God help you!"

A Foolish Dad.

Her Father—No, sir, I won't have my daughter tied for life to a stupid fool.

Her Suitor—Then don't you think you'd better let me take her off your hands?

Near-Music.

"Did they have music at the entertainment?" asked William.

"No," replied Ethel, "just accordion playin'."

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Catching the Smugglers;

Or, Frank Coke's Bravery

By William Ressman Andrews

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CHAPTER IV.
ON THE RAFT.

IN THE white light of the moon Frank's head bobbed up and down, the waves quietly breaking over him as he moved along with an overhand stroke. He struck out away from the shore at first, to avoid the breakers, small as they were. Describing a half-circle he finally made directly for the cavern. The moment he got in view of its interior he received a shock, although he was already prepared for the sight from the prisoner's description of his plight.

He saw a young man in the twenties standing on a small raft of short, thick logs, his legs tied together with ropes; his hands bound behind his back; a handkerchief used as a gag, which had slipped down from his mouth; and a chain around his neck.

"Thank Heaven, you've come at last!" cried the prisoner, in relief, when he saw Frank's head appear in the moonlight.

"I'll do my best," responded Frank, manfully.

But there was a note of self-reliance that gave the man encouragement. He felt that if anybody was capable of rescuing him, it was the young fellow swimming heroically into the unknown depths of his watery death cell.

Nothing more was said until the swimmer put his hands on the edge of the small raft. Taking the keys and wire out of his mouth, he placed them on the logs, and then trod water—for it was over his depth at this point, as well as farther out—to catch his breath and get his bearings.

Fortunately the moon was still in the sky, and there would be plenty of light by which to attempt the rescue. Frank tested the raft to find out if it would hold two persons. This it would barely do. Taking up the keys and wire, he mounted the small float. It sank under the surface, and at first it looked as if his weight would carry it beneath the waves. He got off quickly for fear the prisoner would be left dangling in the air. If the raft was not capable of bearing the weight of two people how was the rescuer going to reach the lock and perform his task?

Then another disconcerting thought flashed through Frank's mind. He had no knife. How was he going to cut the ropes on the man's hands and legs? But then again, that was of less importance than releasing him from the chain.

"I have it," he finally decided.

The next moment Frank had again leaped on the raft. But quickly his free hand shot up to the chain. Grasping it with a firm hold he kept part of his weight off the bobbing foothold under his feet.

The keys were inserted one after another in the lock at the man's throat. But working with one hand was very unsatisfactory, and he was not able to open it. Nevertheless, the prisoner looked at him with grateful eyes.

"Thank Heaven, you were sent to me in this time of need!" he said. "I never expected to leave this place alive, those fiends seemed to have done their work thoroughly; and the tide is always certain in its coming and going."

Another plan occurred to him. "Have you a knife?" he asked of the prisoner.

"Yes, fortunately. The smugglers did not think it worth while to empty my pockets before doing this to me," answered the man. "Just feel on the right side."

A penknife was found, and the blade was drawn across the strands of the ropes.

"So far so good," exclaimed Frank. "Now for the next move. And you can help."

"Tell me what to do."

"Now that your hands are free, grasp the chain as far above your head as you can reach."

The prisoner obeyed and waited for further instructions. "Ease your weight from the raft by letting it come more on the chain."

The moment this was done Frank clambered on the raft. It did not sink beneath him. Then he quickly inserted the keys again in the padlock. The first two failed to open it. The last one, however, turned with a snap, and the lock flew open. He threw it into the water and took away the chain from the man's neck.

"At last, I'm free," exclaimed the prisoner, "and you've saved me."

Releasing one hand from the chain, he grasped Frank's and wrung it gratefully.

"I only did what anybody should do when a human being is in distress," said Frank, modestly. "I couldn't have passed by with the cry of a person needing help ringing in my ears."

Frank's next thought was how to get the man to a warm fireside somewhere. He must be chilled from exposure, and needed a hot supper and a comfortable bed. He told the man his intentions.

"Yes; I appreciate what you say," was the reply. "But I'm not so badly off as that. It's nervous fright more than anything else. When a man faces a lingering death he doesn't have time to think of much beside that."

Frank agreed and was glad to see him keep up his courage and consider the lack of creature comforts of less importance when they seemed so remote just then.

Frank was anxious to learn who the prisoner was and why he came to be in such an out-of-the-way place, but there was no time yet for explanations.

"You lie down on the raft until the soreness gets out of your wrists and ankles," said Frank, "and I'll swim along, pushing it till we get to the spot where I lowered myself into the water."

The man protested and wanted to do what Frank had set for himself, but the boy would not hearken to their changing places.

"At least let me swim with you and help push the raft," protested the man. "Or why do we need it? I'm strong enough to swim to the place you came down."

That did seem the natural thing to anybody who supposed that there were any number of places to scramble from the water's edge to the cliff above. The man's remark showed that he was less familiar with the location than Frank. Evidently the smugglers had brought him to a part of the coast unknown to the prisoner. And such procedure seemed most likely in a case where vicious men wanted to commit such a high-handed crime, a crime that seemed more like vengeance of the bitterest kind, thought Frank.

Something told him not to cast away the raft. "Let's swim with it to the ledge I jumped from into the waves," he said.

Then the two got behind the frail structure and struck out, after the prisoner had divested himself of his clothes and put them in the center of the raft. The tide was running strong and they had all they could do to prevent being carried out to sea. Presently the raft was brought to the one spot where it seemed likely the swimmers could climb up the cliff.

At the urgent request of Frank, his companion reached out first for the lowest rocky projection. But he could barely touch it with his fingers.

"I'll steady the raft," said Frank, pushing it close to the cliff. "Then you leap up and try to get hold of the first projection."

His companion did as directed, but without satisfactory results. He fell back into the water amid the spray of the waves breaking against the smooth rocky surface. He made several trials, but each one was a failure.

"Isn't there some other part of this promontory where we can get up," asked the young man.

"No; I don't know any more about this locality than yourself," replied Frank.

Just then a wave larger than the others tossed the raft up on its crest. The breeze increased to a stiff wind.

"We are in for it," declared Frank. "A gale seems to be blowing up."

Just then the moon dropped out of sight, and rescuer and rescued were castaways on the broad bosom of the Atlantic Ocean.

CHAPTER V.
A PRECARIOUS SITUATION.

By the last disappearing rays of the moon the two looked at each other in consternation.

"We are in a fix," declared Frank.

"And I'm sorry that it was through me it happened," said the other, moodily. "If you hadn't bothered there would not have been this bad end for you."

"Tut, tut!" protested Frank. "I'm not thinking of that."

And the manly young fellow, on the other hand, was trying to devise some way out of their difficulty. But there was nothing that the most ingenious person could do on the broad, restless expanse of turbulent waters, that lonely summer night.

Finally he saw how helpless they were and admitted it to himself. "Say, I guess the only thing we can do is to keep as tight a hold of this raft as we can until we are rescued."

"Ah, yes; rescued," echoed his companion from the other side of the float.

There was a note of suffering in his voice, like one who had gone to the limit of his endurance, and now felt resigned to his fate. But Frank, with the optimism of extreme youth, its unquenchable hope and refusal to be cast down, came to the rescue of the other's spirits, as he had come to his physical rescue so short a time before.

"Cheer up; we ain't dead yet," he declared, indomitably. "And there is a pretty good chance of our remaining alive for some time, bad as things might look now. We will get the best of the things against us, after all."

There was a force to his words which acted like magic to his older companion. "Guess you have the right idea, taking as a text the saying, 'Keep a stiff upper lip,' when things seem to go wrong." Then he was silent a moment. At last he spoke again and forced a laugh. "Can't let anybody outdo me with cheerfulness in a bad situation, when there might be a chance to get out of it. But the one you just released me from," he said, reminiscently, "seemed to be utterly hopeless."

"Yes, and yet you see what happened," answered Frank, confidently. "We have a better chance of escaping this one."

"How do you mean?"

"The raft won't drift so very far, and we are right in the line of coastwise vessels," said Frank. "Then again when the tide turns we will go back and perhaps have the luck to strike a sandy beach instead of unscalable granite walls."

This hopeful view of their predicament cheered his companion considerably. With the feeling that rescue might come any moment, the tension of despair was broken, and they proceeded to take things as comfortably as possible. A calmer frame of mind in his companion induced Frank to inquire who he was.

"Tom Blakely," was the reply. "And your name?"

Frank told him his, and related as much about himself as he felt the other should know. Then his companion briefly explained how and why he was found chained in the cave.

"To be perfectly candid with the person who saved my life, I'll tell you I'm a detective connected with the secret service," explained Tom Blakely. "I joined last year after leaving college. I found smugglers, haunts on an island six or seven miles from the coast, a few weeks ago, and was leaving for the mainland to get deputies for making arrests when I was discovered. They learned of my object, and then decided on a fiendishly ingenious way of putting an end to me."

"Wonder if the cave is ever used for anything?" asked Frank. "Looks so from the chain."

"From what they said the cave was occasionally used to keep a boat in," answered the detective. "Yet I don't see how they could reach it from the top of the rocks. Must be a secret entrance from above."

They were not permitted to speculate any further on the subject. A light, increasing in size quickly, caught their attention. They were not kept long in suspense. Its nature was soon made manifest.

"By jingo!" exclaimed Tom. "It's the light of a steamer."

A tremor passed through Frank's body as he realized something else. "Yes, and the ship is heading right this way," he cried.

Anxiously they watched its approach, helpless in their ability to get out of its course. If they only were in a rowboat and had a pair of oars, thought Frank. But wishing made no difference.

Could it be, after all the difficulties both had passed through recently, they were at last to be cut down by a steamer's bow in the boiling waves of the Atlantic? Their shouting voices were drowned in the noise of the gale. They compressed their lips grimly and waited to meet their doom. On rushed the huge ship. When it got nearer, the churning of its propellers smote their ears, and they gave themselves up for lost.

"Good-by," said Tom, solemnly.

"Good——" Frank stopped short. "Hurrah!" he shouted, gleefully, pointing toward the steamer. "She has turned from her course."

"How lucky!" cried Tom, fervently.

Sure enough, the swiftly-moving ship which seemed on the point of cleaving them with her sharp bows, had suddenly sheered off to starboard. The lookout, however, had not seen the dark speck of a raft with its perishing occupants. So Frank and the young secret service detective were still left to their fate, with the prospect of a watery grave.

To make matters worse, the wind increased in violence, and they had difficulty in keeping a safe hold on the raft. But it was hold fast or sink. And neither wanted to sink, though it was apparently a hopeless situation.

But escape seemed to come to them at last. The raft bumped into a dark object suddenly, and the encounter startled them for a second, until they found out what it was.

Frank was the first to recover his speech. "Why, hello, it's a rowboat," he cried, delightedly.

The next moment he grasped the gunwale. Blakely, alive to the occasion, grabbed the other side. They both clambered aboard. The oars were gone, but anything was better than the raft. An examination showed that there were no leaks.

"We can congratulate ourselves on finding it seaworthy," said Frank.

Although thankful for what had been sent them, he couldn't help wishing for

oars. But that would not have been any advantage. Neither knew which way to row.

Chilled though they were from the water, they both lay down in the bottom of the boat and fell into an exhausted sleep. Neither now cared about the storm or their prospects of being rescued. It was a case of physical endurance reaching the limit. The boat rode the waves, pitching and tossing in the raging gale like a shuttlecock. Fortunately, the gunwales were high, and kept the water from splashing over the sides and making it necessary for constant bailing, which would have been out of the question, as there was not even a tin can in the bottom of the boat.

After a while the wind abated, but the sleepers were oblivious of the change in the weather. "Tired nature's sweet restorer, sleep," had cast a heavy spell over them.

CHAPTER VI.

A CLOUD'S SILVER LINING.

Next day the sun was high in the heavens when Frank awoke and gazed around. He was somewhat dazed, and for the moment could hardly realize that he was not safe on terra firma.

The sea was as smooth as glass—quite a contrast to the raging, tumbling waves of the night before. And the day was hot. The sun's rays, beating down steadily almost from the meridian, had thoroughly dried Frank's underclothing and the detective's clothes.

But one thing more impressive than anything to the young man in his return to consciousness was the appearance of land. Not over three hundred yards away was a beach. Frank saw that is was not the Maine coast. No ocean waves broke on the shore. The water right up to the sandy stretches before his eyes was as placid as a lake. This decided Frank that the boat had drifted to an island, and that they were on the side opposite the mainland.

He glanced at his companion. Blakely was still asleep, but Frank felt that he would not object to being disturbed to find out how near their uncertain watery journey was at an end.

"Hello, there!" he cried heartily, his manly young features beaming with cheerfulness.

Blakely stirred slightly, turned over on his back, yawned, and finally opened his eyes with the half-dead expression of a person who has been in a profound sleep for hours.

Frank smiled and repeated his greeting. Blakely sat up with a start.

"Hello, yourself!" he said. "Where the deuce are we?"

"Not at the bottom of the ocean, that's one thing," replied Frank.

Blakely looked around. "Well, I guess not," he exclaimed. "And there's a landing place. One of the islands, I suppose. No such luck as its being the mainland."

"Afraid it isn't," assented Frank. "But I for one feel pretty grateful to know we aren't dying from thirst and hunger in the middle of the ocean!"

The detective looked at his companion. "Yes, you're right, and it does sound ungrateful for me to complain. I didn't mean it just that way, although I guess it sounded like it."

"No harm done," said Frank, appreciating the detective's repentant mood. "I understand how you felt on waking so suddenly without realizing where you were for the second."

"That's it," declared Tom.

"Now to get ashore," said Frank. "I am so thirsty I can almost drink seawater. Hope when we get on land it won't take long to find a nice, cool spring somewhere close by."

Blakely agreed with this sentiment, and added that a little food wouldn't seem bad, after their long fast. The boat was gradually drifting toward the shore, and presently it got in shallow water.

Frank and Tom jumped out. It was only waist deep, and they were able to wade, drawing the boat slowly after them. The keel grated on the pebbles, and at last the castaways felt safe. But they were hungry. It is all right to escape dire perils, and a person feels thankful for escaping them; but it is rather prolonging one's suffering to keep food out of his reach for some time after an uninvited fast.

They looked around for signs of a house, but there was none in sight. All they saw was a stretch of sandy shore a few yards wide, extending as far as the eye could reach. Back of this was half a mile of salt meadow grass. Beyond that could be seen a thick wood.

"Well, we must explore the island for food and drink," said Frank. "Can't be this place is uninhabited."

"It would be bad for us if it should prove a kind of Robinson Crusoe island," commented Tom. "Well, you lead the way, and we'll see what's on the other side of that wood."

"Anyway, we ought to find a spring," said Frank, hopefully.

He then started across the meadows, right through the grass, as there was no footpath. One might have led down to the beach, but no signs of it was seen by the two. Frank looked at his underclothes.

"Perhaps it is better, after all, if this island is uninhabited," he said, dryly. "I'm not just dressed up to be seen by people."

Tom smiled. "That's true. But if we run into a lot of persons suddenly discovering us, I'll head them off until you get out of sight."

Walking was not pleasant for Frank. He was in his stocking feet. He had left his shoes with his trousers and coat on the cliff before making the plunge to the detective's rescue the previous night.

When they reached the woods, a grotto a little farther on was hailed with joy, for the sound of trickling water greeted their ears refreshingly. Rushing to the spot they were not disappointed. A cleft in a perpendicular rock revealed to their parched senses a sparkling pool half a yard in diameter. Moist, green moss grew on the stones near-by. The water cooled their feverish lips and throats and made them feel like different persons.

"My, I never realized what a Heavensent gift water is until now," said Tom Blakely.

He knelt on a flat stone, and, making a cup with his hands, took a long, refreshing draught of the pure, cold spring water. Frank, too, lost no time in tasting the delicious cool beverage.

"Nothing like it," he said after getting his breath. "If that was situated on the mainland where it could be bottled and sold to people in cities who can't get anything but nasty reservoir water, we would make our everlasting fortune."

"Yes, indeed," agreed Tom. "But if we can draw the net around the smugglers, we'll make quite a little money. It will be enough for us to forget any regrets about bottling spring water for the city markets."

"I don't quite understand," said Frank.

"Why, just this: A large reward has been offered by the Government for the capture and conviction of the smugglers who almost got the best of me," explained Tom. "Since you saved my life, I am willing to give you half of the reward, if I can put them behind the bars. And the sum is worth while."

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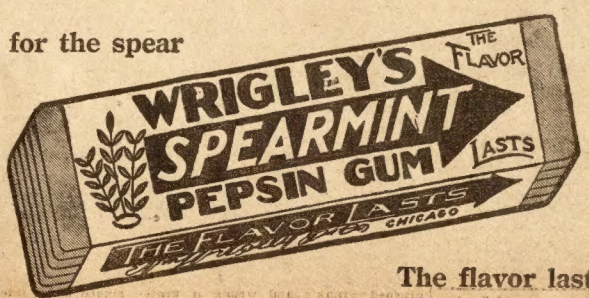

The flavor lasts

"You don't say," exclaimed Frank, surprised at all this information.

"You can't guess how much will come to you?" said Blakely.

"Haven't the faintest idea," said Frank.

"Five thousand dollars."

Frank shot an astonished glance at the speaker.

"Five thousand dollars!" he repeated. His eyelids opened to their fullest extent. The sum almost took his breath away. "Why, that is a fortune," he gasped. "And that's half of the reward? The whole sum is ten thousand dollars. My gracious, but that's a quick way to make money."

"Yes; it takes a lot of people years to get such an amount," said Tom Blakely. "But they don't take the same risk. You see from the predicament in which you found me, that to earn such an amount quickly a man takes his life in his hands at every turn."

"I see," said Frank. "And certainly bravery should have its reward just as much as anything else."

"Sure thing; a man's life is everything," said Tom. "He only has one to live."

CHAPTER VII.
FOOD AND SHELTER.

After quenching their thirst they continued the hunt for some place where food could be obtained. The belt of woods was quite thick, and it was some time before they penetrated it to an opening on the other side. Here they saw a cultivated field.

"This is encouraging," said Frank. "Sign of people being around. Ought to come to a house farther on."

Presently they arrived at the brow of a hill. Down in the valley below a two-story farmhouse sat snugly in a pine grove. A dog's bark announced to its occupants the advent of visitors.

The two weary castaways exchanged grateful looks, and felt that at last a haven of temporary rest was at hand in a time of dire stress. The dog barked, seemingly in a friendly way, and they continued their approach. But when within a few yards from the front door Frank stopped behind the concealment of a clump of shrubs.

"You go ahead alone," he said. "I'm not dressed just the way I would like to be for visiting."

"I'll give you half the money."

"That's no dream," answered Tom, airily.

The young detective then proceeded to make their presence known to the occupants. He knocked on the door. No one responded. He knocked again. This time he heard shuffling feet in the hall.

Presently the door opened. The head of a middle-aged woman appeared. She glanced at Blakely inquiringly, and waited for him to state his business before venturing to open the door further. Briefly he mentioned their experience on the boat, leaving out any reference to the events leading up to the unpleasant and uncertain hours it tossed on the angry waves. The woman's manner changed and a look of pitying interest appeared on her face.

"Wait till I get a suit of my boy Sam's clothes for your friend," she said. "Then bring him in, and I'll get something to eat for you both."

She turned and disappeared. Not long after she returned with a coat and pair of trousers in her hand. The clothes fortunately were about Frank's size. When he got them his face beamed with relief; and he also blessed the woman's kindness in offering them food. It didn't take long for him to get into Sam's garments.

Then they walked up to the house. The woman was Mrs. Dunker. She told them her name after they had introduced themselves, and she said that Frank was just the kind of boy her Sam was. This was fortunate for the two castaways, for they knew that in that event everything would go along well.

"So you boys are hungry?" she said, cheerily. "Well, I'll soon make you feel different. Guess you'll like my cooking, too. Most everybody does. Sounds like boasting, I know."

Her wholesome, motherly face was lit up with a bright smile, and the boys nodded their heads, in confirmation of her cooking abilities.

She then bustled around from pantry to stove, and then to the table; from the table to the cellar, and back again to the pantry. Smoking viands soon greeted their nostrils. The good woman, her heart moved to pity by their half-starved appearance, brought out her best preserves, cakes and a fine loaf of delicious home-made bread. Then she put on their plates some tomatoes just taken from the kitchen garden back of the house. Already she had made them a pot of coffee to revive their exhausted energies, and now they sat down to a meal that seemed more like a banquet to their half-starved bodies.

She hovered around, watching them eat. The moment their food got low she served them with another heaping lot.

"It just does my heart good to see you eat," exclaimed Mrs. Dunker, as she poured out more coffee and helped them to the smoking roast.

During the meal she kept them entertained with her family affairs and an account of the island.

It was situated about ten miles from the mainland, and was known as Hank's Island, named after one of the early settlers who had bought it from the Indians shortly following the coming of the Puritans and the Pilgrims. It measured a dozen miles in length and four miles across.

A good-sized town was located at the extreme end, opposite the point where Frank and Tom landed. The part where the boys had come ashore was practically uninhabited. Most of the people were fishermen; yet there were a number of well-kept farms up and down the length of the land. Mrs. Dunker's place was one of them.

She was a widow who had been left with two boys, one Sam and an older son, Gilbert. Their absence from home was explained by a journey to the village with a wagon-load of produce.

Frank and Tom were asked to stay and rest for the next few days. She felt sure of their finding it pleasant visiting with her sons. It was so seldom that strangers were seen in that part of the island they were made to feel welcome for a long time. But of course, Blakely had the smugglers to run down, and the sooner that he and Frank got on their trail the sooner they would earn the reward.

"But the first thing is to go to town and get you a suit of clothes you can call your own," said Tom, later in the day, while they were strolling around the place.

"But how can I do that?" exclaimed Frank in surprise. "I've no money."

"Oh, that is easily attended to," declared Tom, with a mysterious smile.

"But how?" asked Frank still mystified.

"By drawing on your part of the five thousand dollars," smiled Tom.

"Eh, what's that?"

"Don't be alarmed. Just what I said."

"But I haven't got it yet, and there doesn't appear any likelihood of my getting it, either," said Frank.

"Don't be so sure," said Tom, confidently. "I'm going to lend you what-

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ever is necessary, then after the capture, you can pay me back."

Frank glanced at his companion in surprise. "Well, you certainly feel sure of rounding them up."

"Indeed I do, give us time," said Blakely. And he meant every word of what he said.

For some months he had been on their trail. Several times he was on the point of running them down and getting the criminals safe being prison bars. But something intervened at the last moment, and of course, there was the final failure, which almost cost him his life.

Regardless of his experience he was just as enthusiastic over the work as ever. Nothing daunted, his virile spirit urged him on to victory. Furthermore, he saw what mettle the lad who had saved his life was made of, and realizing that his failures had been due largely to the lack of the right kind of assistance, he decided that Frank was just the one who could help him in the next move against the smugglers. He thought of all this and had resolved on the plan just mentioned, with full knowledge that the men he was seeking were more vicious than he had first supposed.

A rest of a few days at the farmhouse of the kind-hearted widow would put the two in fine fettle. Their improved condition would justify the delay. So they loafed and invited their souls, as it were. The widow's sons were found to be very companionable young men, and the visitors took delight in conversing with them.

Much was learned about the surrounding islands and their inhabitants. Of course, already, Blakely knew of the one frequented by the men he was after. He felt sure, too, that the smugglers had another hiding-place he had been unable to find out about in the past.

It was purely accident that this information came to his ears. One night, as the four were strolling along the beach in the moonlight on the deep-sea side, they noticed a boat shoot through the surf propelled by four pairs of oars, one man to an oar. They might have been mistaken for life-savers, but Tom knew of no station on the island. He inquired of Sam.

"No; no life-savers here," he said.

Blakely was going to ask questions about the boat and its eight occupants, who seemed to be coming ashore with a desire not to be observed, but Sam made it unnecessary.

"Wonder who those people are?" asked Sam. "They don't belong to the island. I've lived here all my life and know everybody. But they are strangers."

There was no suspicion in his voice; just mild curiosity. But the question meant a great deal to Blakely; and Frank divined Tom's thoughts in the question. Both had decided that there must be a good reason for the unknown men making a landing at that hour in a part of the island uninhabited for a mile back from the water.

Blakely, the moment he discovered the boat, made an excuse for going into the woods with his companions. Frank understood, but the two farmer lads acquiesced without dreaming of the motive of the request. Tom remarked on the lateness of the hour for him and Frank, as they wanted to get up early the next morning.

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* * *

Wedding Bells.

Probably the most exasperatingly interesting feature on tap for preventing feminine tongues from accumulating rust is a wedding.

Weddings occur daily—or nightly, as the case may be. There is nothing more numerous than weddings—with divorce a poor second—yet the interest in them never seems to slump the slumps.

And the unsocialized neighbors who were left at the post when the flag fell and the trouble started—how they do work the interrogation point overtime! How did the bride look? How was she decorated? What did her bridal harness cost? Did her mother do a weeping stunt? Has what she married got money? Is she likely to get along with his mother? Was her veil real lace or made in Connecticut? And so on to the end of the chapter.

Instead of marrying her first ideal, a girl usually grabs a chap whom she has decked over and over again that she wouldn't marry if he was the last male biped on earth. And the man? Oh he was going to annex a beautiful heiress and live forever after on the sunny side of Easy street—but when the lavender wrapper is torn from his package of romance he's in luck if he finds himself tied to a muscular female who is willing to take in washing so that the odor of soapsuds will disgust the wolf and keep him from the door.

Of course, when Mary Ann faces the parson with her lottery ticket her mamma is tickled, for that gives her the longed-for opportunity to let the tucks out of Sarah Jane's skirt and trot her out for inspection. Yet mamma turns on the briny flow at the wedding because it is expected of her.

Naturally, the bride occupies the center of the stage at a wedding—also nine-tenths of the rest of it. Who cares anything about the bridegroom? He might as well be the wooden dummy in front of a second-hand clothing emporium. The bride's family tolerates his presence and presents because something of the sort is required to complete the ceremony. A nervous bridegroom is a fly in the gravy. He is expected to strut up to the sacrifice like a newly-appointed colonel at the head of his regiment. He is there merely for the purpose of becoming her husband, and that's all there is to it.

All the social swimmers present engage in a gabfest and discuss the proceedings. They wonder what she could see in a fat man—what he could see in a scrawny thing like her. Then they grow reminiscent and comb their memories for recollections of all the "old girls" he ever made goo-goos at, and all the "gentlemen friends" she used to imbibe pink lemonade through straws with. Any one of those present could have arranged a more suitable match.

But it is a woman's nature to accept; therefore it is up to man to propose as a matter of self-defense. After all, what a barren waste this vale would be without weddings to discuss, fuss over, criticise, belittle and go to—honestly now, wouldn't it? And last, but not least, how would the poor, hard working license clerk manage to convert the sweat of his brow into bread at the rate of $2 per convert if the rest of us went on a strike and quit getting married? What?

* * *

Woman—How does a young man show his love?

Man—In different ways.

Woman—And what betrays the opposite feeling?

Man—Indifferent ways.

* * *

The Interpretation.

The college instructor should take pains to practice what he preaches.

One member of a class in English composition brought his theme to the professor after recitation hour in order that the professor might read a marginal correction which he had written, and which the pupil had been entirely unable to make out.

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And that form of home surgery is dangerous. A slip of the blade means infection. And that means blood poison, sometimes.

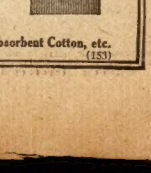
A chemist has discovered a way to end corns. This discovery is embodied in our B & B wax—the heart of a Blue-jay plaster.

Apply this little plaster and the pain ends at once. Then this B & B wax gently loosens the corn. In two days the whole corn, root and all, comes out.

No pain, no soreness. You completely forget the corn.

There is no other way to do this. That is why Blue-jay is the only treatment used by folks who know.

It has removed already fifty million corns. Let it deal with yours.



A in the picture is the soft B & B wax. It loosens the corn.
B protects the corn, stopping the pain at once.
C wraps around the toe. It is narrowed to be comfortable.
D is rubber adhesive to fasten the plaster on.

Blue-jay Corn Plasters

Sold by Druggists—15c and 25c per package

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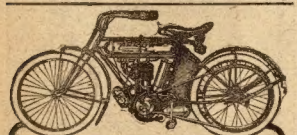

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THE FAIRY CORNER

THE NONSENSES.

When the Nonsense family moved next door to Matilda, she left all her dolls on the front porch and went across the lawn to get acquainted with the Nonsense children. There were two of them, Dick and Mollie, and before many days had passed Matilda was well acquainted with both. She liked them when she saw one at a time, but when she saw them both together it was confusing. The Nonsense family were strange in one particular—their conversation. Matilda never could get used to it. If she went and sat on the front plazza of their house the conversation would be something like this:

"I wonder whether pink or blue would be best for Mollie," Mrs. Nonsense would begin.

"Well, I don't think it's going to rain," Mr. Nonsense would reply.

"And be sure you add plenty of sugar," Grandmother Nonsense would continue.

"Tag is by far the nicest," Dick Nonsense would remark.

"And there are lots more near the Nonsense, "but nobody else is interested in sailing."

"I'm fond of talking about dresses and sailing," said Grandmother Nonsense, "but nobody else will talk about preserves."

"I don't mind your talking about dresses," said Dick, "and I love sailing and preserves, but nobody else cares for tag."

"And I love dresses and sailing and preserves and tag," declared Mollie, "but I wish some one would take an interest in the strawberries I found by the brook."

"You're all in a jumble!" declared Matilda, "who was a strong-minded little girl, "and you'd have the nicest kind of a time if you'd only talk about the same thing. Let's begin on Mollie's new dress and all talk about that until we've said all we want to about it."

So they began on Mollie's new dress and when they had finished that interesting subject they talked about sailing and preserving and tag and strawberries.

When it was time for Matilda to go the whole Nonsense family said they had

"Why don't you children wash your faces?"
"Say, lady, you's gotcher dates twisted. Dis ain't Sattiday!"

brook," would come from Mollie Nonsense.

When Matilda had listened as far as this she looked from one to another in bewilderment.

"What makes you think so?" she asked, hoping some one would say something enlightening.

"Well, you see," Mrs. Nonsense explained kindly, "pink is much more becoming to Mollie."

"And in that case," continued Mr. Nonsense, "we can go out sailing this evening."

"Because," said Grandmother Nonsense, "otherwise it won't jell."

"And naturally," continued Dick, "it's much more fun than sitting still."

"But of course there are!" declared Mollie, "I saw them myself."

"But what are you going to do about it?" asked Matilda, in desperation, wondering if she would ever understand this strange family.

"Buy some," said Mrs. Nonsense.

"Go," said Mr. Nonsense.

"Make some," said Grandmother Nonsense.

"Play it," said Dick Nonsense.

"Eat them," said Mollie Nonsense.

"And what," asked Matilda patiently, "are you all talking about?"

"Mollie's new dress," said Mrs. Nonsense.

"Sailing," said Mr. Nonsense.

"Preserves," said Grandmother Nonsense.

"Tag," said Dick Nonsense.

"Strawberries," said Mollie Nonsense.

"Then," said Matilda, seeing light, "are you all talking about different things?"

"Of course," said the whole Nonsense family at once, "we always do."

"But how confusing!" said Matilda. "Why don't you talk about the same thing?"

"They aren't interested in dresses," said Mrs. Nonsense, sadly.

"I'm interested in dresses," said Mr. never spent so pleasant an afternoon. And as she said good-by, "My dear Matilda," said Mrs. Nonsense, "I'm quite sure it will."

"But it certainly won't," declared Mr. Nonsense.

"Then it surely will," said Grandmother Nonsense.

"I know there's not," exclaimed Dick.

"And, of course, there are!" called Mollie.

"What are you all talking about now?" asked the poor perplexed Matilda.

"About whether pink will look best," said Mrs. Nonsense. "I'm sure it will!"

"About whether it will rain," explained Mr. Nonsense. "I'm sure it won't!"

"About whether it will jell," said Grandmother Nonsense, "for it surely will."

"About whether there's any nicer game," said Dick. "I'm sure there's not!"

"About whether there are any strawberries left," said Mollie. "Of course, there are!"

"I quite agree with you all," said Matilda, politely. "Good-by."

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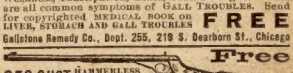

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